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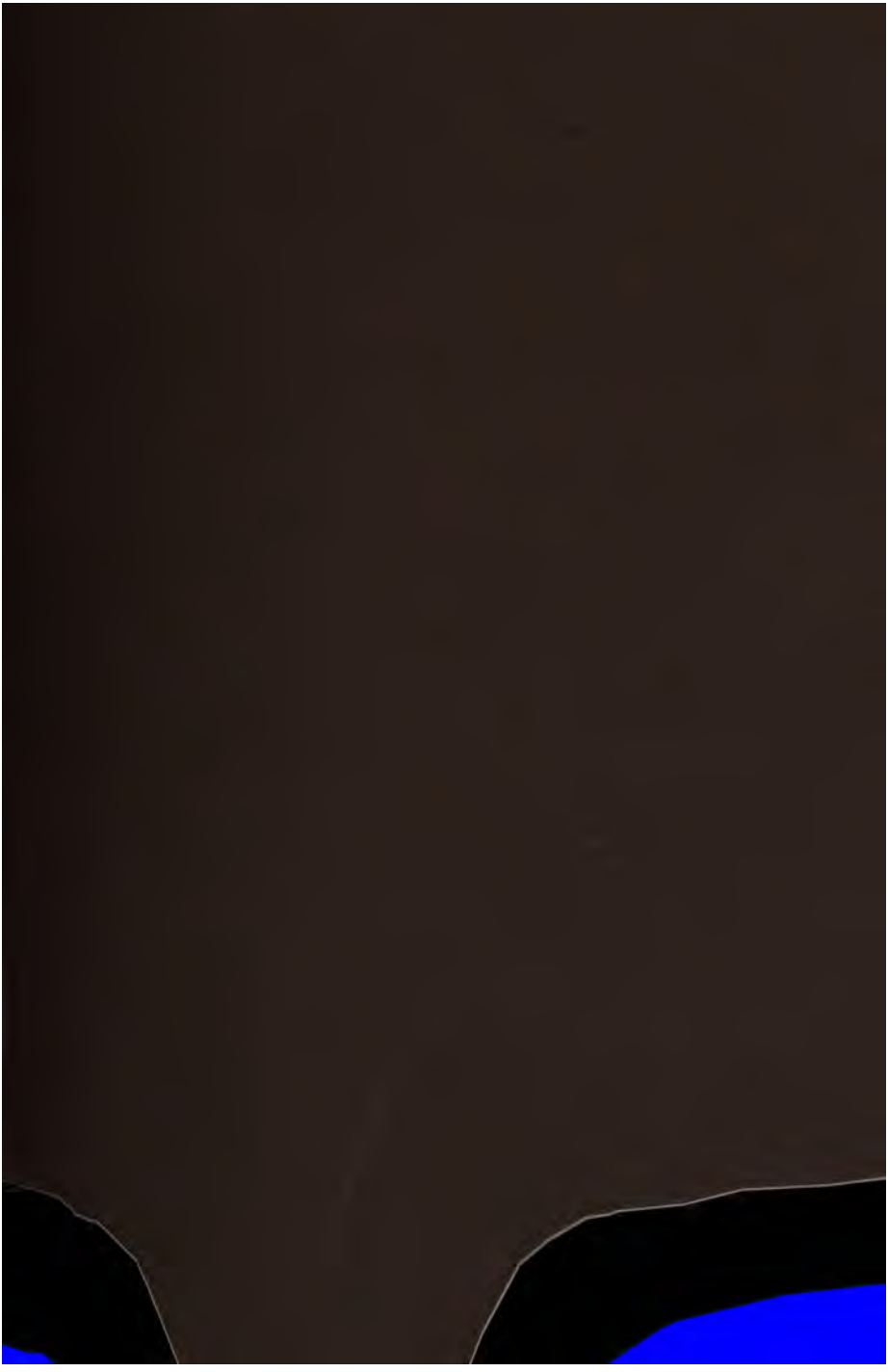

THE MONOMANIAC OF LOVE.

THE

MONOMANIAC OF LOVE.

A STUDY IN
THE PATHOLOGY OF CHARACTER.

"Religion and ethics, with their too inflexible dicta, have never sufficiently allowed for the pathology of character, a yet unstudied, weighty theme."

MISS HELEN ZIMMERN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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Page 148, for "*blancmange*" read "*blanc-manger.*"
„ 253 „ "what" (5th line) read "that."

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CHAPTER XVI.

ALL A MISTAKE.

Immediately upon the death of Mrs. Hogg being known to her, her married sister came to reside, temporarily, at Daisy Cottage, and took upon herself the task of carrying out all necessary arrangements. She informed Arthur that he must leave as quickly as he could, as the house was going to be pulled down. The gentleman, she said, to whom it belonged, and at one corner of whose estate it stood, intended taking in the ground it and its garden occupied into the wilderness attached to his pleasure garden. He had wanted for some time to enlarge this wilderness, but had not liked to give her sister notice to quit, as she had been his tenant for very many years. And she herself, as soon as her poor sister was put under ground, wished to sell off the furniture at Daisy Cottage, and to return to her own home, to resume her preparations for emigrating to Australia—for she, with her husband and children, was about to emigrate there as soon as possible.

Forced to leave Daisy Cottage, Arthur decided that he would altogether leave the neighbourhood of Reading. In consequence of the threatened legal proceedings by Mr. Woods, he preferred to be out of that neighbourhood, and more particulary to be out of the way of seeing Miss Brown. He felt, too, quite in an unfit state to attend to any business at all. In the peculiar morbid state of mind that he was in he shrank, too, from going to live with strangers. His way of comporting himself, he felt sure, would show him to be in a strangely disturbed state of mind, and he feared he might get stared at by them, and taken to be out of his senses. His former landlady, he reflected, at Gloucester Street, Regent's Park, was well acquainted with all his peculiarities, and he therefore decided to go and lodge at her house again, if she was able to accommodate him. Having written to her, he learnt that she had a sitting-room and bedroom vacant. He at once agreed to take them, and entered upon possession the day after Mrs. Hogg's funeral.

The first thing that he did upon coming to London was to call at the West London Fever Hospital, to inquire how Rotha was going on. The surly lodge porter at the hospital would scarcely condescend to listen or speak to Arthur. Half-a-crown offered by the latter to him to mollify him was refused—the

man muttering something about the legal proceedings, and that he was not to be bribed. From this, Arthur presumed the man regarded him as a probable criminal, to accept money from whom might, ultimately, get him into trouble. Immediately he had refused the half-crown the bearish fellow slammed the door in Arthur's face.

Arthur left the hospital much cast down and perplexed as to what to do for the best. He saw plainly that the lodge porter would not trouble himself in the slighest degree to get or to give him any information about Rotha. He would only give him, if he called, some surly answer just to get rid of him, as likely to be false as to be true, and that the man himself would be quite indifferent as to which it was.

For a whole fortnight Arthur went on in a distressing state of indecision as to what steps he should take in regard to Rotha—feeling disposed to do one thing one day, and then, the next, after having slept on his intention, seeing strong reasons for not carrying it out.

At the end of the fortnight he determined to go and see his friend Andrews, and in a familiar talk with him let out his trouble to him by degrees, at least to a partial extent. Even with a partial knowledge of the unfortunate position that he was in, Andrews, he thought, might be able to give him some advice that might be useful; might be able to extend to him a

helping hand to pull him a little way out of the Slough of Despond that he was in.

Calling, the evening of the day that he came to this decision, at the house at Haverstock Hill where Andrews had lived for a long time, Arthur found that he had recently left, and gone to live at Notting Hill. Procuring Andrews's new address from his late landlady, Arthur started immediately for Notting Hill; but, on getting to the address given him, found that his friend had been home from business, had his tea, and gone out for the evening. Arthur left his name with the servant, and also his present address, for he had not yet let Andrews know that he had left Reading, and said that he would most likely call again the following evening. The afternoon of the next day, however, he received a post-card from Andrews to say that he was coming to see a friend at Haverstock Hill that evening, and would call on Arthur on his way.

"Well, and how are you by this time?" said Andrews, when, arriving about seven o'clock, he was shown into the snug sitting-room of Arthur, and shook heartily the clammy limp hand of his friend.

"Precious queer and miserable," replied Arthur; "but that's nothing new for me, you know. You, however, don't look the thing at all."

"No, I feel thundering queer too. I have been

awfully worried lately. The engagement is all U P between myself and 'my Jemima.' A disappointment of that kind is a great blow to a fellow."

"Naturally. And how did it happen? Tell me all about it."

"Well, the last time I saw Miss De Vere—one Sunday afternoon a few weeks since—she asked me in a very significant manner, as we were taking a walk together, 'When do you think of settling?' I told her that my income at present was not sufficient for me to get married on, and that I could not give her any idea how soon I should be in a position to fulfil my engagement to marry her. She said that a hundred a year—she already knew that I had only a hundred a year—was quite sufficient for us to get married on; but I stoutly maintained that a hundred and fifty a year was the lowest that it would be prudent for us to begin housekeeping on. We argued with one another on the subject until we both got out of temper. She at length told me, in a very provoking manner, 'That I wasn't going to make a fool of her,' implying that I wished to do so. I felt very indignant at this; but she looked in such a passion that I thought it best to say no more to her upon the subject then. The remainder of that day, while we were in each other's company, we only spoke to one another upon indifferent subjects, in a restrained manner. And

when I parted from her, to return to London, I could see that she was greatly offended. By Wednesday morning's post I received a letter from her, saying that, after consulting her friends, she had decided upon breaking off her engagement to me. I wrote immediately in reply, begging her to reconsider her decision, but received no answer. The next Sunday I went down to Canterbury, with the object of seeing Miss De Vere and remonstrating with her; but I found that she had left the 'Grapes.' Both her aunt and uncle-in-law there said they approved of what she had done, and though I tried to persuade them to tell me where she had gone, they would not do so."

"I think I can tell you, though," said Arthur.

"You!" rejoined Andrews, opening his eyes very wide.

"Yes. She has gone to Richmond—at least she was there a few weeks ago—that would be just after she had broken off with you." Arthur then told Andrews about his seeing Miss De Vere and her mother in Mr. William Brown's office, giving all particulars connected with his doing so that he thought would interest his friend.

"I see what their little game is," exclaimed Andrews, after listening eagerly to Arthur: "they are going to set themselves up for fine ladies, and fish to catch rich husbands."

"And, unless I am mistaken," said Arthur, "the old lady is likely to get a bite from an old fish known as Peter Brown; at all events, I believe he is at present eyeing the bait."

"I hope for his daughter's sake that he won't be hooked," rejoined Andrews; "but some fish seem made to be caught. I remember once when fishing at Twickenham, that, fancying I had a bite, I lifted my line out of the water, and on the hook found a fish's eye. I threw hook and eye directly back again into the water, wishing to try how the eye would do for a bait. My float had scarcely been an instant on the surface of the water when it bobbed down, and what do you think it was that I caught? The fish whose eye I had just pulled up a few moments before! I hope Brown's eye has not been so caught by Mrs. De Vere that she will succeed by it in catching himself."

"I suppose she is likely to be a skilful angler, though," rejoined Arthur, "for she's a widow, Mr. William Brown tells me—widow of the late Major De Vere."

"Major in what?"

"Mr. Brown didn't mention whether it was the regular army, the militia, or the volunteers, that the lady's late husband was major in," rejoined Arthur, significantly. "Very likely he was in the Horse

Marines. But didn't Miss De Vere, during your engagement with her, ever talk to you about her parents?"

"Rarely ever. The subject seemed a disagreeable one to her, and when a fellow is sticking up to a girl, he wants to talk about what is pleasing to her, so I didn't press her with questions about her father and mother. She has, however, told me that her father was a very bad man, and her mother a widow, living on an annuity that she has. She has also told me that she was not on friendly terms with her; that they could not hit it together at all, but were always quarrelling; and that, at length, after a desperate quarrel between them, she ran away from home to her aunt at the 'Grapes,' and ultimately, being obliged to get her living somehow, took the place of barmaid there."

"If her mother was a major's widow, that seems rather a strange thing to do. One would have thought she would have preferred being a governess."

"I don't think she is well enough educated for a governess. Besides, she said that she liked living with her aunt better than with anybody else."

"Not being well educated, then, and being without money of her own, she does not appear to be the sort of young lady likely to secure a wealthy husband. Her personal attractions, too, are not of the dazzling

kind calculated to make a rich man so to lose his senses as to marry her for them only."

"I am glad that you think so. I only hope that she will remain unmarried until I have a larger income, and can offer to marry her without delay."

"She will then, no doubt," rejoined Arthur, "return to her first love; and then, in your relations with each other, all will go merry as a marriage bell."

"But I think that, all things considered, it will be best for the present to let matters rest as they are between us, don't you?"

"Yes, I think it will."

"Did you hear at Mr. William Brown's office that Mrs. De Vere had any reason for choosing Richmond, in particular, to take a house at?"

"No; but I surmise that one principal reason with her would be that she could let her house furnished part of the year, so as to live rent free the other part. Or, perhaps, that, through its being so pretty and favourite a spot, it would be easy for her to get a boarder, or boarders, if she wished. Probably, also, she likes the place, and believes the air will suit her. Again, she very likely wants to be near to London for its amusements, and to it is but a ride, by railway, of twenty minutes from Richmond."

Arthur paused. He had been talking on, thinking the while that before he finished he would somehow

commence to break the ice about his own trouble to his friend; but failing to see how he could satisfactorily do so, he paused to reflect.

Directly he left off talking, Andrews began to talk again. "Misfortunes," he said, "never come alone. As if what I have just been telling you wasn't trouble enough for me, I have had another affair to cause me a great deal more. I have been threatened with an action for cruelly beating a servant, and so damaging her nose as to disfigure her for life."

"You mean you have been selected as the victim of some plot for extorting money, I suppose?"

"No; it was all a mistake."

"All a mistake! You excite my curiosity. Tell me the particulars."

"Well, as far as I now understand them, here they are. Where I lodged at Haverstock Hill a niece of the landlady, until within the last few weeks, acted as slavey. She was a poor sickly creature, subject to fits and trances, and heaven knows what—not at all strong enough for a servant. She and her aunt, too, got on very badly together. The aunt only kept her because she could not get another servant for such small wages as she gave her; and the niece only stayed because nobody else would take a girl looking so ill as a servant. It appears that one evening the girl went on in a strange, excited way (I fancy she

must have had some odd sort of hysterical attack), and that her aunt got out of temper with her, and scolded and beat her. Soon after they went to their bedrooms, which were close together and only divided by a partition. The niece did not go to bed, but sat up for a long time, making a noise by talking loudly to herself, and laughing as if in a mocking manner, preventing the old woman from getting to sleep. She called out many times to her niece to be quiet, but the girl, it seemed, continued to make the same noise, as if in defiance. My late landlady at length got in a rage, and going into her niece's bedroom—it was a mere closet, and she had to sleep with the door open—gave the unhappy girl a good thrashing. On leaving her, her aunt, ordering her to go to bed directly, gave her at the same time a violent push that caused the girl to fall, and somehow injure her nose severely. The angry old woman then went back to her own room.

"I must explain to you that I slept out that night at a friend's house, where I went to a bachelors' party. I breakfasted with my friend in the morning, and went from his lodgings to my office. My landlady knew that I slept out that night; but her niece, it appears, did not. Unfortunately my not turning up as usual in the morning helped to confirm a strange delusion under which the morbid mind of her hysterical niece was

labouring, and which it happened to suit the purpose of my then landlady to encourage. To her aunt's astonishment she, in the morning, accused *me* of being the author of the bruises on her face and the injury to her nose. She said I came home drunk, before she had gone to bed, and made a great noise coming upstairs: that she went out on to the top landing, and, leaning over the banisters, asked me to make less noise, or I should disturb the lodger on the first floor, who was very ill. Instead of minding, she further said, I laughed at her in a mocking way, sat down on the stairs close by the first floor, and kept on shouting out, 'We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do.' She then, she stated, went down the stairs as far as where I was sitting, and begged of me to be quiet, and told me if I would get up she would help me upstairs to my room on the second floor. At this, according to her, I flew into a violent rage, indignantly denied that I had been drinking; told her that I would not put up with such insolence even from her mistress, and, savagely seizing hold of her by the right arm, flung her downstairs on to the half-landing, bruising her face and injuring her nose. I then, she said, went up to my own room and slammed the door, and she herself managed to crawl up to her own room, where she cried herself to sleep. I have no doubt the girl quite believed this story to be true. She must, I suppose, have had some horrid

dream in the night, and been delirious when beaten and pushed down, in the dark, by her aunt, and thus mixed up the two things in her mind together. If her aunt had only let her know that it was she herself who was the cause of her injuries, it would have prevented the girl's delusions bringing a lot of trouble upon me. But my late wretched old landlady, it appears, to suit her own purpose, pretended to believe this story as substantially true. She had once before got into great trouble for cruelty to a servant-girl, and she was terribly afraid of getting into similar trouble a second time. Her niece, not seeing me in the morning, not unnaturally imagined that, in consequence of being ashamed of myself, I had gone off early, with the intention of getting my breakfast elsewhere. The old woman was artful enough to prevent her from seeing that my bed had not been slept in the previous night, by persuading the girl to stay downstairs and bathe her bruised face, while she, by herself, made the beds that morning. She also, it seems, tried to soothe the deluded girl by telling her that she was sure I should most deeply regret my behaviour; that I was intoxicated at the time of its occurrence, and so did not know what I was about; that, no doubt, I would make her a present, in compensation for her injuries; and so forth, and begged the girl not to do me an injury by saying anything

about my being drunk and flinging her downstairs. In spite of all her aunt said to her, however, the girl at once wrote an account of my presumed ill-treatment of her to her mother.

"When I got home from business the evening of the day following the night on which the niece imagined that she had been thrown by me downstairs, I noticed that the girl shunned my presence, and that her aunt waited upon me herself. And matters went on the same way, in this respect, for a day or two, when I learnt that the girl had gone to the West London Fever Hospital, being attacked by scarlet fever. I fancied then she must have been kept out of my way because it was feared she was sickening for scarlet fever, and the aunt did not wish that I should be frightened. I had no idea at all of the true position of affairs."

"What did the girl's mother do in consequence of her daughter's letter?" asked Arthur, as Andrews stopped speaking to collect his thoughts.

"She wrote angrily to my late landlady, who, as she dare not tell the truth about what had happened, being so frightened on her own account, in her reply kept up the fiction of my having caused the poor girl's injuries. She tried, however, to make out that her niece had greatly exaggerated the affair. By specious falsehoods she managed, it appears, to partly pacify the mother. The girl, however, has an aunt who is a nurse in the

West London Fever Hospital, and who has no good opinion of her sister, my late landlady. This nurse, having heard the girl's sad story, and being an impulsive and energetic woman, made a great stir in the matter, and it was mainly through her that I was ultimately threatened with legal proceedings."

"And you, of course, I presume," said Arthur, as his friend again made a pause in his narration, "at once instructed a solicitor to act for you?"

"Of course; and took care to let him know that several people at the house of my friend, whom I have already spoken of, could prove that I slept there. My solicitor afterwards saw my then landlady, and, somehow, so managed to frighten the old wretch that he got the whole truth as to the origin of the accusation against me out of her; and so the threatened legal proceedings collapsed. But what a lying, unscrupulous woman the girl's aunt at the hospital must be! What do you think that she had the wickedness—at least so I hear through my lawyer—to affirm about me? She positively affirmed that she saw me one day, when I called at the hospital to inquire after her niece, and that I, most unequivocally, admitted my guilt to her; whereas I can solemnly swear that I have never been even in the neighbourhood of the hospital in question since her niece has become a patient there."

"Pray what's the name of the poor girl who has caused you so much trouble?" asked Arthur, excitedly.

"Cowper—Sarah Cowper. Do you fancy that you know her, then? You have not seen her at Haverstock Hill, because it was after your last visit to me there that she came to be servant with her aunt. But, by the way, she comes from Serfswell, near Reading, where you have been living. Perhaps you got to know her there?"

"A girl of the name you mention was pointed out to me by a party at a Methodist experience meeting, that, out of curiosity, I was led to go to at Serfswell."

"An experience meeting! And perhaps next time you met her was at a love feast? Well, she has very pretty features, though she does always look so awfully pale. Ah! you quiet ones are always the worst."

Arthur was in too bewildered and distressed a frame of mind to give heed to his friend's banter. "Can you tell me," he said, as his friend, after what he had just said, looked at him and smiled knowingly,—"can you tell me whether the present name of the mother of Sarah Cowper is Loothar?"

"Yes, it *is* Loothar. You know Sally's mother, then?"

"I saw her at the Methodist class-meeting, at the same time as her daughter."

"Then, I suppose, you know Mr. Woods, who instructed the solicitor to act on behalf of Sarah Cowper? He, I think I have heard, is leader of the Methodist class that Mrs. Loothar is a member of."

"By sight only," replied Arthur, making great but unsuccessful efforts to conceal how much he was disturbed.

"You seem dreadfully upset at what I have told you about Sally Cowper," said Andrews, regarding his friend with much surprise. "I'm very much inclined to think that you really are spooney on to the girl. But I ought to have told you that I am assured that her nose, by clever surgery, has been so repaired as to have a greatly improved shape to what it had before being injured."

"I'm not in love with Sarah Cowper," answered Arthur, irritably; "but what you have just told me shows me that I have made a frightful blunder. If Fate goes on much longer sporting with me as if I was a mere miserable shuttlecock, I shall go stark staring mad, that's all! An extraordinary concurrence of unfortunate circumstances has caused the nurse at the West London Fever Hospital to take me for you; and I, little dreaming of what I was

doing,—as if I was you, to seem to admit your guilt to her."

"Well, I'm d——d!" ejaculated Andrews, and then, as he stared in astonishment at his friend, a thought struck him, inspired by his appearance and by recollecting that the sitting-room had smelt strongly of brandy when he entered. Persons in the state in which he now suspected Arthur to be, will, he knew, sometimes give themselves up to the police for purely imaginary murders. Supposing his friend might be in that disordered mental condition, would not the delusion that it was *he* who had in some strange way caused the nurse at the hospital to make the cruel statement she had done be a tempting one for him to fall under?

"I say, look here, Howard, my good fellow," continued Andrews, "you haven't had a break out in the way of drinking, have you, and have now got the horrors, and are under the influence of delusions, and inclined to accuse yourself of all sorts of wicked things? You know, I have seen you in that sort of state before now. Tell me, now, you *have* been taking a little too much brandy lately, eh?"

"I have been taking rather too much lately, I admit," answered Arthur; "but, still, not so very much, I assure you."

"No, no; not so very much," rejoined Andrews;

"you have not drunk it exactly like water. But brandy is strong stuff, you know."

"I know that as well as you do; but I really am not under the influence of delusions, as you seem to think. It's trouble that causes me to appear as I am."

"Yes," rejoined Andrews, significantly, "your room smelt strongly of trouble—I mean of your trouble—when I entered it."

"But I really am in very great trouble, and through my own mad folly, I regret to say. It was to get you to play the part of a father-confessor to me that I called on you last night; but while you're in your present mocking mood, I haven't the courage to make my confession to you."

Oh, don't think, my dear friend, that I can't enter into your feelings," remonstrated Andrews. "On the contrary, I know exactly how you feel: you feel as if last night you had murdered a family, and then drunk their blood hot as a night-cap. But father-confessors, you know, refuse to listen to penitents who are under the influence of liquor. My advice to you is to go to a chemist presently; tell him that you have been drinking a little too much, and ask him to give you an opiate. If you can get a good sleep to-night, I bet you a sovereign that when you wake in the morning you will have forgotten the crimes that now torment you."

Arthur shook his head mournfully and hopelessly.

"Oh, yes, you will," continued Andrews, encouragingly. "I am sorry that I can't stay with you any longer, to try and cheer you up, but the friend upon whom I have appointed to call will, I know, be already getting impatient about my being so late; so ta-ta, old fellow, and do try a bit to keep your pecker up. By the way, to-morrow's Sunday, you know: would you like me to call for you in the morning, and then for us to take a good long walk together?"

"I think I should," answered Arthur.

"All right, then, I'll be here to-morrow, between ten and eleven. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Arthur, dejectedly, giving his limp hand to his friend, who squeezed it as he shook it till Arthur winced.

Going moodily to the street door, Arthur then opened it for his friend, who set off running towards Park Street.

CHAPTER XVII.

A FRIEND IN NEED.

SUNDAY morning, between ten and eleven, as arranged the previous evening, Andrews was at the lodgings of his friend Howard, and found him ready to start.

"Well, where shall we take a walk to?" he asked. "Shall we go over Hampstead Heath, and along the road that passes the 'Spaniards' and Lord Mansfield's park, up to Highgate Hill?"

"If you don't mind, I should like to go in quite a different direction—to Gorse Common. We might take the 'bus to the 'Royal Oak,' and set out on our walk from there."

"I'm quite agreeable to going in whatever direction you like. Let us go to Gorse Common, then."

"The fact is," added Arthur, "I want to call at the West London Fever Hospital. What I told you last night about my having been there, and being taken for you, is not a delusion, as you seemed to think last night, but is an unfortunate fact.'

"But how, in the name of fate, then, did such a thing happen?"

"I called to inquire about the niece of my late landlady at Daisy Cottage. She ran away, and came to London, through her aunt ferociously beating her. Fainting in a street at Paddington, she fell into the hands of the police; and, on being examined by a surgeon, she was found to be suffering from scarlet fever, and was sent to the West London Fever Hospital. How, at the hospital, I came to be unfortunately taken for you, happened in this way."

Arthur then told Andrews of the conversation he had overheard between young Woods and the nurse, and how, no names being mentioned, he had rashly jumped to the conclusion that it was he himself who was being talked about.

"But I thought you said it was her aunt, not you, who cruelly beat the girl at Daisy Cottage?"

"Yes, it was her aunt who beat her," said Arthur; "but I regard myself as the cause of her being beaten; though I think it best not to mention why I do so."

"Oh, I see. Then what you want to call at the hospital for is to inquire about the niece of your deceased landlady, as, through the mistake that has been made, the answers to the inquiries about her that you have already made there really applied to Sarah Cowper?"

"Just so."

Arthur then went on to explain to Andrews the bearish behaviour to him of the lodge-porter at the hospital, and his fear that he would very likely that morning, as soon as he saw him, slam the gate in his face, instead of answering his inquiries.

"Well, shall I call at the hospital and make inquiries for you, you keeping out of sight while I do so?"

"Thank you; I should be very glad if you would. You have had the scarlet fever, I believe?"

"Oh, yes. But, to be enabled to make full inquiries about the poor girl in whom you are interested, I must be supplied with all necessary particulars."

"Of course."

Arthur then took from his pocket a metallic note-book, and, after turning over several of its leaves, handed it open to his friend, saying,—

"Here is my pocket note-book, in which I think you will find most of the particulars that you will require to know. It contains very exact notes, made to be referred to by myself, that, when I learnt she had run away to London, I made previous to starting on my search after Mrs. Hogg's niece."

"All right," rejoined Andrews, taking the note-book, and immediately setting about reading the particulars referred to. When he had done this, he

proceeded to ask his companion various questions. These Arthur duly answered, as well as spontaneously giving such additional particulars as he thought requisite.

This done, the two friends made their little excursion to Gorse Common. Andrews, as he had agreed to do, made full inquiries at the West London Fever Hospital about Rotha Redbreast, Arthur, while his friend was doing this, remaining where he could not be seen from the entrance-lodge.

When Andrews rejoined Arthur, he, in response to the latter's eager looks, said,—

"Well, I managed to obtain an interview with the nurse that you saw. Poor Rotha Redbreast is still in the hospital, only just recovered from scarlet fever. Unhappily, she is quite idiotic, and has been so ever since she has been in the hospital. Her state of mind is presumed to result from her brain having sustained some injury from the fall on the pavement, on which she was found insensible by the police. Nothing intelligible can be extracted from her; but, through you having left with the police the address of the aunt with whom she had last been living, the police have been enabled to make inquiries at Serfswell as to whether she has any relations able and willing to take care of her. It turns out that she has none. Since you left Daisy Cottage, on account

of Mrs. Hogg's death, the sister of hers who lived near Reading has, with her husband and family, emigrated to Australia. And several of the acquaintances of Rotha Redbreast at Serfswell Methodist Chapel told the police that she had often said to them, with regret, that she had no relations but her aunt near Serfswell, her aunt near Reading, and an aunt in London, who was a hospital nurse, but whom she had never seen. The truth of this information was also confirmed by Sarah Cowper, who, on beginning to get better, had recognised Rotha Redbreast, both being in the same ward of the hospital. The third aunt of Rotha Redbreast spoken of, it appears, was one of the nurses at the West London Fever Hospital, and died of bronchitis a week or two before Rotha Redbreast was taken there. Thus the nurse who has the care of the poor girl—the same one who has the care of Sarah Cowper—feared, until within the last few days, that her patient, on quitting the hospital, would have to be treated as a pauper idiot. But Rotha Redbreast's pretty face caused one of the assistant-surgeons to take a great pitying interest in her case. He has a lady cousin, who is at the head of a Home for female idiots, conducted by several High Church ladies, and through his influence it has been arranged for Rotha to be placed in that Home."

"Where is it situated?" asked Arthur.

"Ah, that the nurse would not tell me. My inquiries of her were avowedly made on your behalf, and she has, unfortunately, formed a very bad opinion of you. She considers that you have a dreadfully dissipated look. As she spoke to you, too, she says, she detected a very strong odour of brandy. Moreover, she affirms, that when she looked you straight in the face you cowered before her like a conscience-stricken wretch. All this she thinks looks very suspicious—very suspicious indeed, and that your motives for troubling yourself about the girl may be of a kind that should not be encouraged.

"I objected to this that I knew you well, and knew you to be an honourable man, though it could not be denied that you had an unfortunate propensity to drink, which you inherited from your father.

"'But,' answered the nurse, 'even admitting that your friend *may* be an honourable man, and has fallen in love with this poor girl on account of her pretty face, marriage with her in her present condition is impossible. And if it were possible, it would of itself be a crime, and doubly a crime, seeing that your friend is a dipsomaniac. Look at the matter from whatever point of view you will, it is clearly the duty of every one having the slightest regard for morality to do all they can to keep this ill-fated girl altogether out of the way of this friend of yours, who, you own, is given

up to a vice that, notoriously, is a prolific source of vice of all other kinds.' I felt obliged to tell the nurse that I quite agreed with her, and that I hoped when the matter was properly placed before your mind that you would do so too."

"At all events," said Arthur, "I must be content to let matters stand as they are at present. I suppose poor Rotha will be well taken care of where she is going?"

"There is every reason to believe so. The nurse told me the Home to which Rotha is going is a most excellently conducted one. She also said that some of the ladies who devote themselves to the work of carrying it on possess considerable property, so that the benevolent objects of the institution are not checked for want of funds in being fully carried out. Everything, therefore, that is possible to be done for Rotha Redbreast's good, will no doubt be done."

"I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you for taking so much trouble for me," said Arthur.

"Not at all," replied Andrews; "you'll, perhaps, do as much for me some day. I'm sorry I can't ask you to dine with me. I arranged to dine out to-day, as I didn't know what time I should get home."

"And I cannot ask you to come to dine with me, as I, also, arranged to dine out, for the same reason as you."

"I know of a place," rejoined Andrews, "that is not so very far from here where a very good dinner for travellers is to be had on Sunday, at three o'clock. Shall we go there?"

"Yes, I think that will be the best thing that we can do now."

The two friends then started off at a brisk pace to dine together at the place referred to by Andrews.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN ADVANCED POSITIVIST.

Miss Brown was both vexed and surprised that Arthur, after the death of Mrs. Hogg, quitted Reading to live again in London. Trying to understand his motive for doing so, she ultimately came to the conclusion that it was because London afforded him much greater facilities for pursuing his investigations into the Origin of Evil than a provincial town did. Information that she received subsequently tended to confirm her in this belief. Though the communications that passed between Arthur and her father, as appointed agent of the house property that the former had bought at Reading, were purely formal and business-like, Miss Brown, through her friends Mr. Andrews and Mrs. Dubois, had, from time to time, much information as to Arthur's manner of life after he returned to town. And from these friends she always heard of Arthur as sinking deeper and deeper into gloomy melancholy. At least such was the news she had of him, at intervals of a few weeks, as the

remainder of winter, as well as spring and summer, passed away. But in the autumn, about the middle of October, she had still worse news of him from Mrs. Dubois. He was then, she learnt, quite laid up, having lost the use of his legs. This sad condition, her friend told her, had, in the opinion of the medical men consulted in the case, been brought about through Arthur having, for many months, given way to excessive indulgence in stimulants. Despair at being utterly baffled in his attempt at discovering the Origin of Evil was the only way, Miss Brown thought, of accounting for his having contracted so fatal a habit. She was pleased, however, to hear that, through having lost the use of his legs, he was now easily kept from taking any more in the way of stimulants than the doctors thought good for him. It also gave her satisfaction to learn that all was being done for him that could be done, and that he had a very excellent trained nurse attending on him (recommended by one of the doctors who had been called in), belonging to a Ritualistic sisterhood, whose nurses were celebrated for their efficiency. But, in spite of all this, Mrs. Dubois feared that he would not live to see the new year.

When, a few days after having had the preceding sad information about Arthur, Miss Brown accepted an invitation from her uncle and aunt at Richmond to

stay with them for a little while, she determined to take an early opportunity of running up from Richmond, by the North London Railway, to Camden Town, and pay a visit of condolence to that "dyspeptic skeleton with the withered heart," in whom she had learnt to feel so great an interest. This determination she duly carried out; and one fine morning, when the soft October sunshine was gently flowing into his room, found her seated by the bedside of the invalid.

She was much shocked at his appearance, and felt a sorrowful conviction that she was indeed looking upon a doomed man. But what shocked her still more, was the terribly irreligious frame of mind in which, from her conversation with him, she found him to be. This led her, after a while, to say to him very seriously,—

"Would you not like to see a clergyman?"

Arthur shook his head.

"I thought, perhaps, that you might like to see Mr. Jelley," continued Miss Brown. "If you would like to do so, I would call upon him and ask him to visit you. He is a very kind man, and I feel sure he would come."

The Rev. Thomas Jelley was a Broad Church clergyman, who was minister at a small proprietary chapel at Chelsea. Miss Brown made his acquaintance when she was in London studying at the South

Kensington School of Art. He visited the family with whom she then boarded, and with them she attended his chapel. Miss Brown quickly became one of his admiring disciples, and, though not avowedly yet in reality, she accepted him as her pope in religious matters — an exalted position that he still retained. She liked his teaching, because there was no difficulty in reconciling it to the most hard and aggressive facts of modern science. Briefly, "Jelley" Christianity might be described as possessing a gelatinous nature that enabled it to softly yield itself to, and glue itself on to, anything that solidly opposed it. Or it might be described as being twilight Christianity —a convenient amount of evening mist being always at hand to make hazy and blurred whatever parts of it Mr. Jelley, for the moment, found it inconvenient should have anything like distinctness and sharpness of outline.

Arthur had had some little acquaintance with the Rev. Thomas Jelley's sermons and writings, and that little had made him strongly disinclined for any more. Though, therefore, Miss Brown pressed him to consent to see the reverend gentleman, Arthur persisted in declining to do so.

"Of what use," he at length said, with some slight degree of irritation,—"of what use, my dear Miss Brown, can a clergyman's ministrations be to one

who, like myself, has come to regard all things as the mere results of blind, inexorable *laws?* Before acknowledging the claims of any person to speak as the ambassador of a certain great King, it is surely necessary to be certain that such a King exists?"

"But, my dear friend," rejoined Miss Brown, with some warmth, "does not the recognition of the existence of natural laws also necessarily involve the recognition of the existence of a Lawgiver?"

"I know that it is often asserted that it does," answered Arthur, "but not at all correctly so, according to my view of the matter. The expression natural *laws* simply implies the recognition by the human mind that phenomena are invariably the result of a fixed order. In this fixed order of Nature is seen a resemblance to the fixed order in a State governed by *laws*, instead of by the capricious decrees of a personal ruler. There is *thus far* an *analogy* between the so-called laws of Nature and the laws of a State. But an analogy is only a manifest resemblance in some special way between two things otherwise different—it implies nothing more. The legs of a man (in health) *support* his body, and the legs of a chair *support* its upper part: there is therefore, *in this particular*, an analogy between the legs of the two things. But if I should go on to argue that because the notion of walking is necessarily associated in my mind with

the idea of the legs of a human being, therefore the same must hold good of the legs of a chair, I am clearly talking nonsense. If you tell me, then, that the perception of laws operating in Nature necessarily, by the carrying further the analogy between those laws and the laws of a State, proves the existence of a Lawgiver to Nature, I call upon you, by the same style of analogical reasoning, to believe that the legs of the chair on which you are sitting can walk."

"I must confess," answered Miss Brown, looking somewhat perplexed, "that I don't quite see, for the moment, the best way of answering your objection but I have no doubt that Mr. Jelley would be able to do so."

Arthur did not reply, and Miss Brown, after reflecting silently for a few moments, decided to wait a little before pressing Arthur any further about seeing Mr. Jelley, and to talk to him meanwhile about something else. No other subject immediately occurring to her, she inquired of him if his appetite was very bad.

"Very bad," he answered; "I am able to take a mere nothing in the way of nourishment."

"But," rejoined Miss Brown, assuming a sweet and tempting manner, "have you tried a little calf's-foot jelly? It's such a nice thing for invalids."

"No, I have taken an aversion to jellies. Besides I don't believe in calf's-foot jelly."

. "You don't believe in calf's-foot jelly! Oh! it's so nutritious. When I leave here I shall order some to be sent for you from the pastrycook's. I am sure that you will be able to take just a spoonful or two, if you try."

Arthur shook his head incredulously and mournfully.

"Oh, yes, you will," said Miss Brown, encouragingly; "and then, no doubt, you'll feel better after it."

"Dogs fed on gelatine perish miserably," answered Arthur, in a doleful tone.

"But you should remember, Mr. Howard, that we are not dogs, and—and we ought not to think of dying like dogs; and—and—you *will* see the Rev. Mr. Jelley if I send him, won't you?"

"Miss Brown, you cannot surely think it right that a miserable wretch should be mocked on his deathbed! And it would be only mocking me to send a man got up as an undertaker—I mean in black, with a white choker—to prate to me as if I had only attained to that stage of mental evolution known as the metaphysical stage. I am an advanced Positivist. To my mind it is certain that the word 'God' only stands for a metaphysical abstraction; it is certain, therefore, that the *élite* of humanity should no longer condescend to write that word with a big G; it is certain——"

"It is certain that you are very wicked," exclaimed

Miss Brown, in a severe tone, suddenly placing the bedclothes over the invalid's mouth.

Arthur, though he really liked Ianthe Brown, had, through a horrible perversion of moral feeling, the result of bodily disorder, been seized by an irresistible desire to painfully shock her. With a ghastly unnaturalness, having the same origin too, the thought that his nurse, devout Sister Agnes, could hear what he said (she being in the next room, and one of the communicating folding-doors open), and would also no doubt be grieved and shocked at it, added to the abnormal enjoyment of his fiend-like fun.

He removed the bedclothes from his face, and Miss Brown, much grieved at his behaviour, cast on him a look of reproach. As she did so the "fishy" grin that so often follows in the wake of the Mephistophelean sneer distorted his lips. Miss Brown feared that he might be rather light-headed, and that somehow her presence injuriously excited him, so she rose to go. Bending down over him, she then kissed his forehead. Then, shedding tears, she bade him what she believed to be an eternal farewell.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE REV. ALFRED TUDOR.

Sister Agnes was much troubled through hearing the irreligious manner in which Arthur had spoken to Miss Brown. To her it appeared a fearful thing for a fellow-creature to be about to meet his God so utterly unprepared. After Miss Brown had gone she warmly rebuked her patient for his unbecoming conduct. He then acknowledged that immediately after his kind visitor had left him in tears he began to feel very sorry for the way he had treated her. Through weakness he had, he said, been led into yielding to a passing evil impulsion. He begged of Sister Agnes to write to Miss Brown, expressing his great regret for what had occurred, and to plead in excuse that his disordered bodily condition sometimes affected his mind. This the sister promised she would do for him before the evening,—"And am I to tell her," she asked, "that you consent to see the Rev. Mr. Jelley?"

"Well, I would rather not see Mr. Jelley; but you may tell her that, though I don't myself think there

is any use in my doing so, yet, just to satisfy my friends, I am willing to see some other clergyman."

"Very well. Is there any particular one that you would prefer to see?"

"No. I'll turn the subject over in my mind."

"I wish that you would agree to see a cousin of mine, the Rev. Alfred Tudor, who is at present the priest at a small iron church in the lower part of Kentish Town—that's close by here, you know. I should very much like you to see him, because I feel sure that you would get on with him very well. He's not only clever, but very original; and you're so fond of originality, you tell me. Will you see him?"

"I think, perhaps, I may as well do so," said Arthur, in an indifferent manner.

Sister Agnes lost no time in despatching a note, that morning, to her clerical cousin, the result of which was that in the afternoon she had the pleasure of introducing him to Arthur. The description of him, by Sister Agnes, as an original character was, Arthur thought, fully borne out by his appearance. His body was encased in a pea-jacket, and round his neck he wore a blue-with-white-spots silk necktie, tied in a very loose bow. In his left hand he carried a soft felt hat, that looked as if it had just been sat upon.

After some conversation of a general kind, a glance from Mr. Tudor to Sister Agnes told her that he wished

to be left alone with her patient. She then retired into the sitting-room, and closed the communicating folding-door that was open.

In about a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes, the priest came to Sister Agnes in the sitting-room, and took up his position on the hearthrug, with his back to the fireplace. There was no fire there, and Mr. Tudor, as has been already said, had on a pea-jacket, yet he put his hands behind him and made movements with them as if raising the tails of a frock coat, and then stuck his hands in his trouser-pockets, with his arms bowed out as if supporting these invisible coat-tails.

Sister Agnes saw that, absorbed in thought, he did not know what he was doing, but was acting from mere force of habit, and, as she remembered that until recently he had worn a frock coat, and as she reflected that he was evidently not yet quite at home in the unclerical pea-jacket, she suppressed a smile.

After a few minutes' reflection, Mr. Tudor, speaking in a subdued tone, so that he should not be heard by Arthur, said,—

"It's my very decided opinion that we have in the next room rather a hysterical simulation of mortal illness than the reality. There seems to me, if I may so express myself, a great deal of unconscious humbug about your patient. No doubt, the

fire of life is burning in him in a very dead manner, and left to itself would gradually go out; but if we carefully stir it, I feel satisfied that it will burn up again. That's what he wants—stirring up, arousing by a little wholesome roughness. Giving him a good punch now and then would do him a world of good. Or, perhaps, more heroic treatment would be still better. I feel disposed to advise that he should have a blister on his back, that, when well drawn and cut, should not have linen and ointment applied to it, but should be nicely rubbed with a brick. A severe dose of real pain has caused many a man to cease indulging in sham pain. With respect to the irreligious state of mind that he is in, I have not ventured to begin attempting curing it to-day. I have contented myself with trying to get some acquaintance with the precise character and state of his mind, that I may get some idea how best to convince it of the truth of what you and I believe. I wish first to make a reconnaissance of the exact position in regard to religion that he has taken up, so as to plan and deliver my attack in the way most likely to be successful. Perhaps you could help me in doing this. Does your patient ever read now, and if so, what sort of books?"

"He generally reads a little of an afternoon, when the landlady and I get him on to the couch in this room, in order that his bed may be made. Once or

twice he has asked me to give him Shakespeare's Works, but most often it is for one or other of the philosophical works that you may see there in his bookcase that he asks me for. The last afternoon or two he has amused himself by looking over this manuscript book, containing extracts from various writers, made, so he told me, by himself."

The sister, while speaking, had taken up a student's note-book lying on a side-table, and handed it to Mr. Tudor. Turning over the leaves inquiringly, he noticed that its contents were principally passages from the writings of the great apostle of the Unknowable, Mr. Herbert Spencer, the "fearless" prophet of Protaplasm, Professor Huxley, and other renowned modern enemies of Christianity. After looking at it for a few minutes, he said to Sister Agnes,—

"To-morrow morning I will send here a work of a philosophical character, to be given into your hands. Take care that it shall be lying on the table here before Mr. Howard is helped out of bed on to the couch, and that the table is sufficiently near him, and the book so placed that he can easily reach it. As I have no doubt, from what I hear of him, that he is curious about books, he will be very likely to take up the work I refer to, to see what it is about. And as it treats upon subjects that these extracts show that he takes an interest in, he may very likely feel

tempted to read some of it. I hope he may. You will kindly let me know if he does so the next time I call afterwards."

"Yes, I will take particular notice as to whether he seems interested in the work."

"But I must be off," said Mr. Tudor, after looking at his watch. "I have to visit a poor woman at Somers Town, that, until recently, was one of my congregation, and be home again by six."

The sister followed him to the entrance door, to see him out. Pausing on the door-step, he remarked,—

"I think that in future should any young lady call to see Mr. Howard you had better say that he is too ill to be seen. If young ladies are permitted to come kissing him, and shedding tears over him, as they bid him eternal farewells, he will find being on his death-bed so nice that we shall have him go on dying for the rest of his life, and all our efforts to get him well will be frustrated. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, cousin."

As he walked on his way to Somers Town the priest occupied himself in considering what arguments he should first bring before Mr. Howard's mind, as soon as a favourable opportunity presented itself, to lead him to regard the Ultimate Power in Nature under an aspect of less terrifying darkness than that of the Unknowable. For that, now that

he had seen Mr. Howard's manuscript book, he judged to be the barren negative attribute under which he, like many others in the present day, recognised the existence of an Eternal Cause. The first step towards attaining the object that he aimed at, he judged, would be to present such considerations before Arthur's mind as were calculated to lead him into recognising that the Incomprehensible Power that originates all things is more appropriately conceived of under the figure, or image, of a human personality than by any merely negative term. The following is a *résumé* of a little discourse that the priest's reflections, as he walked towards Somers Town, led him to prepare to be delivered before Arthur as soon as he should show himself to be in something like a fit state of mind to listen to it and consider it.

"Nature is the totality of all phenomena or appearances. The perception that it consists of *appearances* involves the conception of a Hidden Reality that originates those appearances. And, notwithstanding the astounding variety of these, scientific progress proclaims, with ever-increasing emphasis, that a fundamental unity underlies them. We are thus able to perceive that Nature is a grand casket in which a mysterious unity of Real Existence is concealed. The key to open this casket is missing, and violently to

seek to force the lock is to die. Yet our minds as passionately crave to know that which it contains as our bodies hunger and thirst for meat and drink. How must we proceed, then, so as to attain, indirectly, the best conception that is possible to us of the mysterious Indivisible Reality hidden beneath the appearances termed Nature?

"Science that treats of what occupies space cannot help us to any conclusion in the matter, for it does not concern itself with what *is*, but only with what appears. Science that treats of extension without regard to what occupies it, cannot help us neither, for its final conception is an Ultimate Abstraction—the mathematical point, and that is the very antithesis of an Ultimate *Reality*. We must content ourselves, then, with a solution of the question that is not scientific.

"That 'nothing can give what it has not got' is an indisputable axiom: all the powers manifested in natural appearances must exist, therefore, in that which causes them. Those, too, who know most of Nature feel most vividly how little it is that they do know of it to what there is to be known; that in it a field of discovery ever lies before them of indefinite vastness. We are thus forced to see in Nature a display of immeasurable power by a Hidden Cause behind it. To attain, then, to a conception of this

Hidden Cause that shall place before our minds something more definite than a vague sense of diffused immeasurable power,—to get a figurative representation of It that will be most likely to give us the nearest idea that is attainable by us of what It really is,—our best course, manifestly, is to contemplate the very highest and most concentrated manifestation of the powers of Nature known to us,—that manifestation in which, as it were, her powers are brought to a focus,—and then think of the Ultimate Reality as most like, yet immeasurably transcending, that. We should place ourselves at the very point of the pinnacle of Nature's wonderful edifice and look upwards. To look downwards for the Eternal Cause, as some do, amongst chemical elements and mechanical forces, with physical science for their only light, is like going down into a coal cellar with a bull's-eye lantern to look after the sun.

"Man is 'the crown and glory of creation,' and his greatness pre-eminently consists in his mental nature—in the highly unique development of consciousness seen in him. And the grandest form of human consciousness is that of highest genius, in which, without knowing how,—as if acting from a sublime influence streaming into it,—the individual mind evolves ideas that take their place as stars in the intellectual heavens, to be looked up to for ever

with admiring wonder by other conscious individualities. Power of this kind we truly term *creative* power. The figurative representation, or image, then of the Incomprehensible Reality originating all appearances that must be the nearest to the truth for us, because it is the highest and greatest one that we can attain to, is that of a human mind presenting the mystery of genius in its highest form—of such a mind contemplated at its most perfect stage of development, and in its loftiest mood of inspiration—contemplated as exercising its glorious energy in joyously evolving intellectual creations destined to immortality, and grandly forgetting the while the galling chains connecting it in time with dying matter—filled with the *divine afflatus* to exist but in the rapturous consciousness, '*I am.*'

"Is this mode of attaining some conception of the Great Source of all things to be esteemed as worthless because it supplies no comprehensive philosophical definition of it, but only a mere little image? Not so. A mere little image may be a wonderfully correct representation, as far as it goes, of an original stupendously vast, with which, in many ways, it cannot be compared. When the sun is shining just after an April shower we see, in the drops of rain on the leaves and on the grass, beautiful little glowing images of a glorious sphere of light that is a million times

larger than the whole earth itself, and distant from her more than ninety millions of miles. Though so tiny, they are beautifully perfect miniatures of the mighty far-off sun. But they have not, on an infinitesimal scale, any actual constitution like his, nor is he conditioned as they are. He is 'a consuming fire;' those tiny images of him are projected into particles of that which quenches fire—they are in drops of water."

CHAPTER XX.

BROKEN IN.

One week-day morning, early in March, and not quite six months after he was introduced to Arthur Howard, the Rev. Alfred Tudor and the former individual, who had now recovered the use of his legs, sat conversing very seriously together in the vestry of the little iron church at Kentish Town at which the priest officiated. The reverend gentleman had just been celebrating matins, and still had on his surplice.

"You have," he was asking Arthur, at the moment this chapter opens,—"you have the general confession that you have written out with you?"

"Yes, I have it here in my breast coat-pocket," replied Arthur, nervously laying his hand at the same time on the part of his coat beneath which was concealed a written account of the sins of his whole life, covering many sheets of foolscap.

The priest noticed Arthur's nervousness, and also that his face had a frightened look. "What you are about to do," he said, in a gravely sympathetic man-

ner, "must naturally be very painful to you. But remember, for your encouragement, that you will make your confession in presence of God, His angels, and His saints, and that amongst the latter are those who once lived in sin and at enmity with God, and who are, therefore, especially fitted to sympathise with you in your moral suffering. Think, too, that by your voluntarily performing this great penitential act you are giving a proof to yourself, as well as to the whole court of Heaven, of the sincerity of your repentance,—that it shows that it is no mere passing emotion of sorrow for your sins that you feel, but a profound turning back of your soul towards the Supreme Good."

The priest then directed Arthur to kneel on a *prie-dieu* chair that stood against the wall to the right of the stove. He, himself, directly his penitent had kneeled, sat down in a Glastonbury chair by his side and solemnly pronounced the following words: "May the Lord be in your heart, and on your lips, that you may truly and humbly confess your sins."

Against the wall, over the chair on which Arthur was kneeling, there hung a large crucifix, the cross of it being of ebony, and the image of Jesus, stretched upon this, being of ivory, beautifully carved. Raising his eyes to this crucifix, Arthur prayed silently for a few moments, and then made an attempt to begin

reading his written confession, that he had taken from his breast-pocket and now held in his hands. But agitation caused his lips to tremble so much, that several successive efforts to articulate the words at its commencement failed.

"Don't hurry, don't hurry," said the priest, encouragingly. "Wait a little, till you can become more calm."

After waiting a minute or two, Arthur was able in a tremulous voice to begin reading. He managed to read on uninterruptedly until he came to the narration of his shockingly unnatural conduct towards his dying mother. Then, overcome with shame and remorse, he completely broke down. It would have been a relief to him if he could have wept, but the source of tears within him seemed dried up. The dying look of anguish on his poor mother's face, that he had seen only at the awful moment that her anguish was just over, was once more vividly present to his mind, filling it with horror.

As a preparation for making his general confession, he had been for the last week going through a course of spiritual exercises at his own home, under the guidance of Mr. Tudor, consisting of devotions, meditations, reflections upon the meditations, and readings of "The Following of Christ" and other devout works. Many of his meditations Mr. Tudor had, naturally, selected to be on the fearful nature and consequences

of sin, and the result had been his half-sleeping moral nature had become thoroughly awakened. He now saw sin in the appalling light in which it is regarded by the Fathers of the Christian Church: his vicious soul had, by a skilled and steady hand, been thoroughly broken in. His past rebellious individuality of spirit now terrified him, as displaying a revolting abandonment to Satanic influence. For he had been brought by his spiritual guide to feel that, by falling through it into mortal sin, he had outraged God the Father, had outraged the Incarnate Word, had outraged the Holy Ghost. But he had been made also to feel that he had done worse still than this. The terrible words of the great St. Bernard had been seared into his soul—"Sin, as far as it is possible to it, *destroys* God." He had been brought to a terrible consciousness that he had deprived God of the life that He lived in his soul, that he had made Him die within him. His heart, he now recognised, should have been a temple consecrated by the presence of divine Love; and, instead of surrendering it up for this purpose, to what a use had he prostituted it! Hiring himself as an assassin to Infernal Hate, he had made that heart of his the accursed sepulchre of a murdered God! He now loathed himself as a wretch who had perpetrated the most appalling of sins possible to man,—he accused himself of being morally *guilty of Deicide.*

The priest, filled with compassion for the remorseful sufferings of his penitent, spoke to him gentle words of consolation. He reminded him that some who were once amongst the vilest sinners upon earth, but who had repented, were now amongst the members of the Church triumphant in heaven.

After this, Arthur gained a little more composure, and, bringing his lips as near as practicable to the ear of his confessor, resumed the reading of his humiliating paper in a hoarse whisper. But when he arrived at the narration of his relapse into habits of intemperance at Daisy Cottage, and its disastrous results, overwhelming shame paralysed his powers of speech.

One of his recent meditations had been on the Holy Family at home, while Jesus was yet a child. Indirectly, and without being guessed at by Mr. Tudor, this delightful meditation, or rather contemplation, had, when afterwards *reflected* upon by his penitent, caused him the severest mental pain; and this pain had come back to him with redoubled force when he reached that part of his paper where he stopped reading for the second time.

In the meditation referred to he had, by a regulated play of imagination, contemplated with ravishment of soul, in their home at Nazareth, sweet Mary as the young and delicate mother; Joseph as her spouse, in the perfection of age, handsome, grave, and modest;

Jesus, the Divine Child, as being simple, amiable, and dutiful. In it he saw Him by whose hands all things were made—the Eternal Word incarnate, as a child, helping the Holy Mother in her household work. He saw Him fetching water for her from the well. He saw Him gathering up bits of waste wood and shavings in Joseph's workshop, and carrying them to his mother for her to make a fire with which to cook the Holy Family's plain but wholesome food. He saw Him running on domestic errands, making little purchases for his gentle mother. He saw "the high and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity" inhabiting, for a little while, a lowly house built by human hands, that He might reveal to men how noble and how sacred in His eyes are the beautiful relationships and humble loving duties of family life—he saw the model earthly home for all the ages.

But when, after this contemplation, he came to *reflect* upon it, the delight of his soul faded away and left him a prey to intense feelings of a quite contrary nature. His reflections then led him to realise his guilt in its full hideousness; to regard himself as having, probably, frustrated the creation of one holy home founded upon the pattern of the Divine model home. This thought filled his heart with more poignant remorse for the great sin of his life than he had as yet felt.

"I have," he mentally said, in bitter self-accusation, "blasted the life of an innocent fellow-creature, who trusted in me as in a brother, and who of her own will had chosen to walk with God—one who, but for me, might, as a virtuous loving wife, proved Heaven's best gift to some worthy, and now lonely, man. I have miserably blighted an opening bud, that, in the genial atmosphere of married love, might have expanded its beauteous leaves and developed into a lovely blossom as a mother. I have traitorously hindered from ascending the domestic throne for which she was born, one who, had she been permitted to reign as queen of a little home, might have become a centre of sweet celestial influences radiating around and bringing gladness to the hearts of the sorrowing who were her neighbours. One whose maternal bosom might, perhaps, have nourished, and who might have gently trained up, and nobly given to the world, some saintly or heroic soul to suffer, and, if needed, die, that the woes of some of Misery's children might be assuaged.

"Wretched man that I am! I have caused one of Christ's little ones to offend whom I ought, at any risk to myself, to have protected from harm. I am a treacherous cur who, set by the Good Shepherd to guard one of His lambs, has pitilessly played the part of a cruel wolf. I comprehend now the reason of my

poor victim's strange behaviour to her aunt; she was utterly demoralised. She had felt that if the God in whom she had believed had existed He could not have abandoned her to the cruel fate that had overtaken her, and, in her despair, she had said in her heart, 'There is no God.' 'The horror of a great darkness' had fallen upon her, in which her feeble reason had quickly been broken upon the wheel of mental torture. Both her moral and intellectual life had been miserably crushed out of her, and left her a drivelling idiot. What, then, shall be *my* punishment when I, her merciless destroyer, shall appear before the Eternal Judge? To utterly despair of my eternal future the Church teaches me is of itself to commit a deadly sin. But though I may not see awaiting me the everlasting flames of the bottomless abyss, I cannot but behold before me a vast and fearful sea of purgatorial fire. And all this deplorable frustration of beneficence—all this appalling moral ruin — all this inconceivable agony yet to be suffered, has been incurred through a single reckless draught of intoxicating poison—through swallowing one vile cup of gin!"

As Arthur rested silent on his knees in the confessional, the preceding reflections, and the anguish caused by them, came back, as has been already stated, with redoubled force to his mind. The agitation thus caused, coming at the same time that he was

filled with unbearably acute shame at the position in which he found himself, made it for some time seem improbable that he would be able to acquire sufficient self-control to finish the reading of his humiliating confession to the priest.

The priest did not urge him to make an effort to continue, but waited patiently, hoping that by the aid of mental prayer his penitent would presently regain some degree of composure.

But as he vainly struggled to overcome the paralysing influence of mental anguish upon his organs of speech, a giddiness seized him, dazzling sparks seemed to flash before his eyes—he felt as if being stunned. In his waning consciousness it dimly seemed to him that some one was actually smiting him to the earth. He uttered a feeble cry for mercy, and then fainted, sinking forwards, his face resting on the top of the back of the *prie-dieu* chair.

The priest was not aware that his penitent had become unconscious, but having heard his muttered cry for mercy, imagined that he had bowed himself down before God in an agony of remorse. "I will repeat the Lord's Prayer very slowly," he said, in a voice of kindly sympathy, "taking one deep inspiration between each word. I have often found that God blesses that as a means of giving composure to perturbed minds. You can repeat the words after me men-

tally, if you are too much agitated to speak them aloud."

By the time the priest had repeated the Lord's Prayer in the manner he proposed, his penitent had recovered from his temporary attack of unconsciousness, and, desperately concentrating the whole powers of his nature into one supreme effort of will, was regaining some control over himself. As an afflicted fellow-creature, in whose case the use of chloroform is not practicable, undergoing some cruel operation, may temporarily swoon under the torture of the surgeon's knife, and then reviving, shudder at the thought that his feeble state may cause the completion of the operation to be postponed, and so may be driven by fear to nerve himself up to endure it bravely to the bitter end, so was it with Arthur. Raising himself up in defiant contempt of his bodily weakness, and imperiously decreeing a forced loan of nervous energy to carry on his holy war, he gave a soul-shaking sigh, "such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death," and in a shuddering whisper disclosed his horrid sin to the priest. He then immediately relapsed into silence. A vague but overwhelming dread that something fearful would follow had now seized him. And the terrible noise made just then by the March wind was but too well fitted to aggravate the intensity of his excitement.

For during the last hour the wind had been rising, and now it beat against and shook the two windows and entrance door of the vestry as furiously as if, filled with ungovernable rage, some ruthless avenger was without who sought entry by violence that he might slay the guilty wretch within. So greatly was the mind of the trembling penitent disordered by fear that he actually turned his haggard face to the violently-shaken door, to each of the violently-shaken windows.

"Try to get calm—try to get calm," said the priest, soothingly. He was pained to behold the scared look on Arthur's face.

As he spoke these words the furious gust of wind subsided, and then died away into sad wailings and sobbings.

"Let those sad sounds now made by the wind," continued the priest, "remind you of that Spirit of which the wind is the emblem, and that 'maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered.'"

Regaining some degree of composure, Arthur then went on with the reading of his confession, and managed without further pausing to continue his painful task to the end.

When he had finished, the priest commended him as having made a very good confession, and then

asked, and obtained from him, some further particulars of his past sins. After this he spent some little time in counselling his penitent as to how to struggle successfully in the future with his sinful propensities, and prescribed a course of daily devotions to be practised for one month by way of penance. Then he pronounced the absolution.

As he did so, his penitent, on his knees before the crucifix, in imagination conceived himself to be with Mary Magdalene at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, seeking pardon of his sins from God for the sake of the precious blood of Christ. And, mentally, he repeated the words from the Psalm, Miserere, "Thou shalt purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

After the absolution had been pronounced, the penitent retired into the church, to spend some time there in mental prayer before the altar.

CHAPTER XXI.

FUROR SCRIBENDI.

THE painful anxiety that Arthur had felt at the prospect of making a general confession of the sins of his whole life, and the terrible anguish that he had experienced while actually making that confession, were afterwards followed by a powerful mental reaction. It had been a dread of his that Mr. Tudor, when he knew the story of his sinful life, and knew of him much that beside himself no other but God knew of him before, would despise him. Instead of this being the case, he now found the reverend gentleman as friendly and as affable with him after as before his confession. Seeing this, in conjunction with believing himself to be freely and fully absolved from his sins, caused him to be lifted up with immoderate joy. It is of the very nature of such a feeling to urge an individual under its influence into extravagances of behaviour. The joyous bacchanal wildly sings and dances. Arthur, spiritually intoxicated, restlessly longed to give expression to his joyousness

in some extraordinary manner. He told Mr. Tudor that he felt prepared gladly to volunteer to take part in a succession of forlorn hopes to be hurled by the Church militant against the strongholds of Satan; that he was prepared joyously to sacrifice himself in the cause of Ritualism.

Mr. Tudor sought to calm his exaltation by telling him that he, as yet, was but a Ritualistic raw recruit, and that he must be content for some time to regard it as his duty to simply, patiently, and diligently practise the "goose step."

But when, after a week or two, he found Arthur's nervous excitement decidedly getting rather worse than better, he urged upon his convert the desirability of his making a thorough change in his mode of life. After considerable persuasion he got him to agree to do as he advised, which was to give up living alone in lodgings in London, and, instead, to board with some respectable family a few miles out of town; and to take to rowing, horse-riding, or some other kind of pleasant out-of-door exercise.

An advertisement inserted in the *Times*, by Arthur, for board and lodging in a respectable family living in a healthy locality a few miles from London, brought, amongst other answers, one from Mrs. De Vere, of No. 1, Queen's Villas, Richmond Hill. For the sake of having a little educated society, she wrote,

and not from mercenary motives, she was prepared to receive into her family an inmate who was able to appreciate the amenities of a refined home. Liberal terms were of course expected—they always are in those families that receive boarders for the sake of society only. Arthur was much pleased at Mrs. De Vere answering his advertisement, because he thought, if he went to live with her, he might perhaps, after a time, satisfy his curiosity to know who Jemima's father was; besides, Richmond Hill was a very favourite spot of his. On going to Richmond, in answer to Mrs. De Vere's letter, he saw Jemima only, her mother having just started on a flying visit to Brighton. Jemima's cheeks became crimson when she saw Arthur, as she well remembered having seen him with Mr. Andrews at the Grapes Tavern, near Canterbury. She quickly, however, recovered her composure, and took the bull by the horns. She explained to Arthur that, owing to a desperate quarrel between her and her mother some years ago, she had run away from home, and having nowhere else to go to, had gone to her aunt at the "Grapes," who, she said, was a very kindhearted woman, but who had married beneath her. She requested Arthur, if he should come to live with them, not to say anything to her mother about having seen her at the "Grapes," as it would only tend to recall former unpleasantnesses

between them, and at present they were good friends, and she wished to remain so.

"You speak only of your mother, I notice," said Arthur. "I presume she is a widow, then?"

"Oh, yes; my father has been dead some time."

Arthur had no difficulty in coming to terms with Jemima. She readily agreed to those he proposed, as she felt desirous that he should become the boarder of her mother. Fortune had not smiled upon her efforts to get a richer lover than Andrews, and she had happened to hear indirectly, through a friend of hers, that he was now a partner with Mr. Peter Brown, of Reading. If his friend, Mr. Howard, came to live at No. 1, Queen's Villas, might that not be the means of bringing her and Mr. Andrews together again, and a renewal of their engagement be the consequence? And no doubt his circumstances were now such that he would think it justifiable to marry her at once, should he again become her lover.

Upon Arthur calling to wish Mr. Tudor good-bye before taking up his quarters at Richmond Hill, the reverend gentleman gave him much good advice. Of this it is only with his parting words that it is thought advisable to trouble the reader.

"Consider yourself as having just undergone a very dangerous operation, and that great care is necessary in the case, or inflammation may super-

vene. Try, then, to keep your mind calm; endeavour, first of all things, to attain to perfect self-possession, and don't suffer any grand religious emotions or ideas to fly away with your soul. There is one text of the Bible that, for a while, I would have you keep constantly before your mind: 'Be not righteous overmuch; neither be ye over-wise; why shouldest thou destroy thyself?' Pray do not think, because great saints have done so, that *you* are called upon ferociously to mortify your poor body; rather live in the manner that is most likely to transform your weakly frame into a more vigorous one to serve God with. In your present state of health do not fast at all. Live well; take plenty of open-air exercise; and do not turn up your nose at innocent pleasures because they may be unintellectual. Regard yourself as being but in your spiritual infancy; and as pure sweets are, in moderation, good for little children, you must not debar yourself from a reasonable indulgence in them. Mother Church, with her babes, follows the example of the universal maternal parent Nature—there's a great deal of sugar, you know, in mother's milk. Goodbye."

This advice was by no means agreeable to Arthur's excited feelings; he was panting to show, in some way or other, his zeal for the Church. However, what the priest said to him commended itself to his

reason, so he determined to try and act as he recommended him. For a week or two he succeeded in doing so. But at the end of that time the desire to give some intense expression to the fiery zeal glowing within him grew irresistible. It then suggested itself to him that it would be an easy mode of doing this to write a vehement article, and send it for insertion in some Ritualistic publication. Reflecting upon this idea he became impressed with the conviction that it was a very good one. After anxiously turning over in his mind what subject he could write about in a way that would be original, he ultimately decided to compose an essay advancing the idea that the reason of Milton's conception of Satan being so powerful a one was largely owing to the appalling incarnation of the rebellious spirit presented by Luther having supplied him with an admirable model. Thus attacking the inventor of Protestantism would, he considered, be a good way of manifesting to an undiscriminating public that Ritualists are not Protestants.

Having written a vehemently anti-protestant dissertation, he entitled it, "The Inventor of Protestantism considered as the Artist's Model for the Hero of 'Paradise Lost.'" A Ritualistic periodical that he took in, seeming to him rather too tame, and to want fresh blood infused into it, he resolved to send

his glowing composition to that. But, before doing so, he thought it desirable to submit it to the judgment of Mr. Tudor, and to learn from him whether it contained anything contrary to the teaching of the Church.

To his painful surprise Mr. Tudor did not like his essay at all, and expressed his dislike in very strong language, thus: "The inventor of Protestantism threw his inkstand *at* the Devil; you had better, Mr. Howard, throw yours *to* the Devil. You will only do ten times more harm than good to the Ritualistic cause if you get scribbling for it at present."

"But my mind is a very peculiar one," remonstrated Arthur, much disconcerted. "It is a restlessly active one. If I do not let it exert its powers upon good subjects, instead of taking rest, as I wish that it would do, it works away mischievously elaborating thoughts upon bad subjects."

"Well, if you positively *must* write something, avoid burning questions. Take up some topic that may be treated in a pretty genial way. I will give you one: write a series of essays on the beauty and the sacredness of family life. Contemplate the family as the simple unit of social union. And as at the domestic hearth 'woman reigns,' and the mother is queen, you may very appropriately personify the social unit as a maternal divinity. Let your 'con-

sciousness *play* around' the beautiful goddess. Admire her sweet perfections under the different aspects presented from different points of view. Approach her, and give her a reverential embrace; then gaily scamper off, and kiss your hand to her at a distance. Gather simple and fragrant wild flowers of every kind that you can find, and weave them into garlands to deck her with, and so on."

"But the topic you suggest does not commend itself to me in my present state of mind as a sufficiently religious one. My ardent desire is to write something that shall help to popularise and enforce the teaching of the Church."

"How, then, could you do so more usefully than by recalling to men's minds, in this age of divorce, the sacredness of the ties of the family? At all events, let me persuade you to make a beginning, and see what you can do with the subject I mention. When you have done so, come to me again; and I will give you advice as to what alterations you should make in your composition, and how you had better go on."

Arthur promised to try and do as Mr. Tudor advised him: nevertheless, the reverend gentleman had caused him to become much crestfallen and vexed by what he had said.

"Mr. Tudor, being an Oxford man, is, I fear, infected with an undue liking for mere intellectual

'sweetness and light,'" Arthur said to himself, in his irritation, after he had left the priest; "and hence the energetic and heroic style of my essay was offensive to his taste. He looked at it from the point of view of the mere man of culture. And he would persuade me, who feel that I have a vocation to bombard the strongholds of Satan, to use choice bonbons as ammunition, while he decorously holds a wax candle for me to see to aim the sugary projectiles. A breach for storming hell can never be effected in that way, I'm sure."

Going through a course of spiritual exercises under the direction of the Rev. Alfred Tudor had not, it will be seen, eradicated the peculiar vanity of the solitarily self-educated man from the mind of Arthur Howard.

By the next day after his interview with Mr. Tudor, however, he had pretty well recovered from his mortification. Having slept upon the suggestion of the priest, he came to the conclusion, as he was dressing himself, that it was worthy of his serious consideration. It seemed to him now as probable that he had a mission to accomplish, specially designed for him by Providence, in the way of bringing home to the minds of an adulterous generation the sacredness of family ties and the wickedness of divorce. Was it not a most remarkable thing, he asked himself, that his mother, though a Protestant, should have held

tenaciously to a belief in the indissolubility of the marriage tie? For that he knew she did, even to the last, although her own marriage was so unhappy a one. Did it not seem as if Heaven had willed that the same belief should be, through her affecting example, deeply stamped into his own mind? Had she not been providentially preparing his heart for a specially vivid appreciation of the teaching of the Church upon the subject?

Directly after breakfast he set about jotting down, at random, such remarks as came into his head on the sacredness and religious significance of the married state. After he had been thus occupied for a little while, ideas in connection with the subject began to flow rapidly into his mind. Soon he became filled with enthusiasm. He had indeed, he felt convinced, discovered what was the special work in the world that God proposed to accomplish through him. He was to succeed in leading civilised men back to a right conception of marriage; in convincing Christians corrupted by philosophy that marriage is a profoundly religious institution; that it is the divinely appointed symbol of the hidden relationship entered into by the soul when for ever she solemnly unites her own will with God's will. It was a glorious work that had been given him to do!

"But then, if marriage is so divine a thing, how

is it," he mentally inquired, "that, as our Saviour teaches, there are no marriages in heaven?"

Instantly the answer flashed into his mind: "Because marriage is a union of two wills, and in heaven there is but one will—God's."

These words not being consciously coined by himself, but seeming to be suddenly projected into his mind from without, caused him, in his strange state of mental excitement, to regard them as gold thrown to him direct from the treasury of heaven. He accepted them as a promise, or first instalment, of future supernatural enlightenment to be bestowed upon him.

For about a week he devoted about three or four hours each day to writing upon the matter that he conceived he had received a divine commission to press upon the world's attention. But gradually he became more and more absorbed in his work, and at length even begrudged the time necessary to take his meals.

When his brain got weary, and the stream of thought ceased to flow, he stimulated it by drinking very strong coffee. This happened mostly at night, when he ought to have gone to bed.

After he had followed this course of life for a little while, his brain ceased to ask for much rest, and appeared quite content with four hours' sleep out of

the diurnal twenty-four. That amount of sleep accorded it, Arthur found no difficulty in keeping it in a state of brilliant excitement for the remaining twenty hours—taking, though, a strong cup of coffee from time to time as a fillip.

He well knew that his health was likely to be seriously injured by so unnatural a mode of life; but to sacrifice himself in promoting a holy cause accorded exactly with his exalted state of feeling. To prove to men that to permit divorce was to sanction the marring—the utter perversion of a divine symbol, was to make it signify that the human will may lawfully be separated from the divine will, was a task he felt of such tremendous import to humanity as to make it a glorious thing for him to risk his life in seeking to accomplish. Though he perished afterwards, he would, he was resolved, like the prophet of old, stand between the living and the dead, and the plague (of divorce) should be stayed.

At the end of rather more than three weeks of excited work, in which he had covered with writing a vast number of sheets of foolscap, it forcibly struck him that it was high time to visit Mr. Tudor, and let him see what he had been doing. He knew, of course, that he had not handled his subject at all in the manner suggested by the reverend gentleman;

but he was satisfied that he had done so in a way that was far superior.

He placed his dissertation in the hands of the priest, then, one morning, in the full conviction that the latter would quickly discern that God had raised up a man who was to do a great work in Christendom. And he was satisfied that such was indeed the case as he remarked the very grave expression of Mr. Tudor's face as he read from the manuscript in his hand. But when he ceased reading, and spoke, his words fell upon Arthur's mind like cold water thrown upon white-hot metal.

"I mentioned to you," he said, severely, "that what you went through during your course of penitential discipline under my direction was to be regarded as a serious operation, and that great care was necessary on your part: that you must keep yourself very quiet, or inflammation might supervene. You have disregarded my advice, and the result I warned you against has taken place. From the wild incoherence of much in this manuscript—from the seeming loss of power exhibited by you in it to see things in their normal relationship to one another—from the display in it of a monstrous vanity such as is common with the inmates of lunatic asylums, it is clear to me that you are suffering from dangerous cerebral excitement.

You are threatened with severe mental illness. There is not a moment to be lost, if its further development is to be arrested. You had better at once consult a physician who is an expert in the treatment of such forms of disease. Dr. Giffard is by far the most wonderful man in that way that I know of. He is at home, generally, until one o'clock for consultation: come with me to see him now. If we jump into a Hansom cab we shall just catch him before he goes out."

Arthur listened to these words in a state of stupefaction. Mechanically he did just what Mr. Tudor wished him to do.

Dr. Giffard was found at home, and consulted in regard to the symptoms of Arthur.

The advice given to the latter by that celebrated physician gave the death-blow to his grand idea of immediately demonstrating, irrefragably, the sacredness of the social unit and the terrible iniquity of divorce. All study was strictly forbidden him, and he was directed, as far as possible, not to think at all, but to give his over-wrought brain perfect rest.

In parting from Arthur, after they had left the physician's house, Mr. Tudor begged Arthur to follow the advice that had just been given him, particularly if he was really anxious to serve the cause of Ritualism, as it would be impossible for him to do

that with a disordered brain. Let him, then, regard himself as a soldier of the Church militant who was obliged to go into hospital, and obey the doctor's orders strictly, that he might be put upon his legs as quickly as possible to fight for her again.

Humbled and bewildered, Arthur muttered that he would do so.

CHAPTER XXII.

A SHAM FIGHT ON WIMBLEDON COMMON.

NATURALLY, Arthur was terribly upset to find that his heroic labours for convincing Christendom of the sacredness of the social unit, and of the great wickedness of divorce, had only for result the bringing of his own mind to the brink of insanity. That such should be the consequence of his efforts he took to be a chastisement of Heaven upon him for not having walked more humbly before God. He was handed over, he thought, for a time to the buffetings of Satan as a corrective discipline. His vanity was to be eradicated by his realising his own miserable helplessness when God forsook him. Unutterably dejected, he struggled to bear his presumed punishment with patience. But his nervous excitement was so intense that he was unable to get any sleep, or scarcely any, and all sorts of abnormal sensations tormented him.

The evening of the fourth day after his visit to Dr. Giffard, on sitting down to dinner he complained to Mrs. and Miss De Vere that he felt strangely unable

either to sit still or to keep quiet in any one position, for longer than a minute or two. After swallowing a few mouthfuls he was obliged to ask the two ladies to excuse him from remaining longer, and immediately left the room. Attacks of nervous restlessness of a much milder form he had often got rid of by "walking them off," that is, by sharply walking about in the open air—sometimes for hours together, until he became thoroughly tired out, when rest became agreeable. Not knowing what else to do, he naturally resolved to try the same treatment in the present attack, and so set out for a walk in Richmond Park.

He was within a short distance of the entrance gates facing the Star and Garter Hotel, when he noticed a lady emerging from the wooded common that lies between the hotel and the village of Petersham, whose face struck him as very much like that of Rotha. She was attired in the dress of the order of Nursing Sisters to which his late nurse, Sister Agnes, belonged. Approaching close to her he became convinced that it was indeed Rotha that he saw before him. She was much changed, though. Mental and bodily suffering appeared to have had upon her the same effect as the lapse of time. Her face was no longer a girlish one, but had quite a matronly look; its appearance indicated, however, that she was now in moderately good health, and that she was contented

with her lot. She gave no signs of recognising Arthur, and instead of accepting his outstretched hand, moved a little on one side so as to avoid him, and then continued on her way at a brisk pace towards the Terrace.

"She cuts me dead," Arthur mentally said, as in surprise and perplexity he stood still for a moment. Then hurrying after her, he said to her excitedly, "Don't you know me, Rotha?" But the only effect of his words was to make her quicken her pace, in order to escape from him.

"Surely, Rotha, you cannot have forgotten Arthur Howard!" he exclaimed, as he walked quickly by her side.

"If," she answered, sharply, "you don't go about your business, instead of annoying me, I shall speak to a policeman."

"No, don't do that," he said. "Pray listen first to what I have to say."

She looked at him, and the expression of his face seemed to greatly displease her, for she began to run to get away from him. A policeman happened just then to be coming towards them, and the Sister almost ran against him. Speaking a few hurried words to him, she at the same time pointed towards Arthur, and then walking fastly went on her way.

Going up to Arthur, the constable laid hold of his

right arm, and said to him roughly, "What do you want to annoy that lady for? You've been drinking."

"No, I haven't," replied Arthur, indignantly. "I was only trying to make the lady remember me; she used to be a great friend of mine."

"Perhaps she remembers you too well, and that's why she don't want to have anything more to do with you."

Arthur was silent; it looked as if the policeman was right.

"You take my advice," continued the policeman, "and you go your way, and let the lady go hers, or you'll get yourself into trouble." Letting go of Arthur's arm, he pushed him roughly in the opposite direction to that in which the Sister had hurried off.

Arthur having gone a little way paused, and looked back. The constable, who was watching him, advanced menacingly towards him. At this Arthur abandoned all idea of following Rotha, and speedily made his way into Richmond Park. Agitated and bewildered, he there first started off along the road leading to the Roehampton Gate, but had not gone about half-a-mile along it when he retraced his steps. He then paced along Beech Walk for about ten minutes; then turned back again and paused, and presently struck out across the grass towards the middle of the park. In its more secluded parts there

he continued to walk to and fro, now in one direction, now in another, for many hours, feeling almost as destitute of intelligent will as a withered leaf blown hither and thither by the wind.

The mental excitement resulting from his meeting with Rotha made him for some time oblivious of the strange physical sensations that had caused him to leave the dinner-table and seek relief in open-air exercise. But gradually they again forced themselves painfully upon his attention. When midnight arrived, instead of being fatigued and inclined to go home to bed, he felt more indisposed to keep still than ever. The fancy then took possession of his mind that perhaps he might find the air on the open expanse of Wimbledon Common more beneficial to his disordered nerves than that of a place with so many trees as Richmond Park. Leaving the park by the gate near the Robin Hood Tavern, he made his way to the common, and continued there his restless promenading.

One hour, two hours were there passed away, but without any abatement of his troublesome symptoms. On the contrary, they became worse. He felt as if being electrified by a powerful machine, the shocks from which were too great for him to bear. Greatly troubled—unable to imagine any ordinary cause, or causes, for his being thus strangely affected, his mind was led to think of those mysterious vital phenomena

the attempt to scientifically account for which has led to the odd theoretical inventions of animal magnetism and psychic force. He remembered, too, with a feeling of terror, that some religious people had attributed these phenomena to diabolic agency. It might then, he thought, be infernal magnetism that he was under the influence of: it might be the psychic force of damned spirits that was being exerted upon him. Dwelt upon, this fear developed into a conviction that devils *were* operating on his nervous system with the object of subjugating his will. Hell was about making a mighty effort to possess his soul.

After a while, though no conception of their forms was present to his mind, he had a vivid consciousness of being surrounded by fiends surging like a vast crowd. He felt himself resistlessly infected by their raging enthusiasm to destroy. Reverberations seemed echoing in his inmost being of their furious shouts, "Be a hell-hound! Be a hell-hound!" And, as if to give a seductive power to these words, there appeared to come with them an illustration of the hellish joy of hunting souls to death. Hordes of fiends, sweeping onwards like a tempest, carried him, in spirit, along with them. Irreparable ruin, infinite desolation, marked the hell-hounds' course. And the delirium of forbidden joy, the ecstasy of Satanic pride, they felt in realising their appalling powers of devastation, he

found himself seduced into sympathetically participating.

Then opposing supernatural forces appeared to enter into conflict with the infernal spirits. He had the mental consciousness of a terrible battle raging about him between the powers of good and evil—each furiously striving, with alternating success, to gain possession of his soul. Presently he felt himself, in spirit, flying like the wind in full retreat with the forces of hell. Amidst the turmoil, from amongst the celestial pursuers, he then heard a sweet pathetic voice imploring him in words of moving eloquence not to consent to serve in the Devil's army. He listened with a keen intellectual pleasure to the impassioned pleading of the voice, but his heart was not touched by it.

At length his exact spiritual position was vividly pictured to him as that of a man hanging by a single hair over the yawning jaws of hell. At the same time the vision of a seraphic female form kneeling on the edge of the black abyss (beyond which she was too pure to come), with arms outstretched towards him, became mentally present to him. "Oh, my love!" she cried, in the sweet pathetic tones of the voice that had been following him, "Oh, my love! if I but once get my arms round your neck, you shall never leave me." But an infernal interior voice that he felt

his back on the grass, and lay there in the position of a man nailed to an "invisible cross."

The excruciating pain he suffered caused moments to seem ages to him, but the spasms in their extreme intensity were not really of long continuance. Before very long they so far diminished as to give him sufficient control over the voluntary muscles to get up and walk about again; but for a long while he still felt in them the most severe pain.

By the potent sobering influence of pain his mind was recalled to a full consciousness of the bare realities of his situation. But this did not lead him, in the least degree, to doubt the supernatural character of what he had just experienced. On the contrary, he was firmly convinced that his soul had actually just been brought into conscious relations with the supernatural world; and the imagery, or spectra of sensation, that had just been present to his mind, he conceived to be its spontaneous dramatic expression of actual spiritual experiences. Facts may be told by very different words by different narrators, and one form of statement may best impart a knowledge of them to one kind of mind and another to a mind of a different order,—to each individual mind that mode of statement being the truest that best enables it to realise the facts related. In the same way, in the strange drama that had just been enacted in

his own mind, Arthur saw merely a set of appearances invented by itself to give a vivid expression to extraordinary spiritual experiences that were capable of being stated in many other ways. He had imaginatively created, in a state of exaltation, representative imagery that enabled him approximately to realise some tremendous immaterial facts in the best way possible for *him*.

But artistically depicting a grand crisis in the warfare of his soul was incompatible with the extreme pain he now suffered. He could no longer put himself, in imagination, in the place of a mere spectator of a drama in which he now so cruelly realised that he was an actor. An actor, he reflected, having manifestly a rigidly prescribed part to perform,—or rather a marionette playing as guided by invisible wires—for, against the mandates of his own will, had he not just been lying there upon the ground fixed in the form of a cross?

Being forced to do this just at the very moment that he was about, as he believed, to surrender up himself absolutely to Satanic influence, satisfied him that it was to the interposition of Divine Power that it must be ascribed. Thinking thus, his mind naturally reverted to the seraph-like form whose arms were outstretched to save him in his trance-like reverie, and from this he was led to think of Rotha, in the garb

of a Religious, coming upon him like one risen from the dead. Had the *soul* of Rotha been with him, striving to rescue him from the Evil One during that fearful night? From seeing him as she, no doubt, believed drunk—still living, as of old, in deadly sin—had she been led, in compassionate fervour, to pass the night in praying for him? Had she agonised in prayer for him—petitioned Heaven with such concentrated, all-persuading, persistent power, that even when he had, at length, betrayed the citadel of his will to the enemy of God, he was prevented from enlisting in the Devil's service, and forcibly taken as a conscript to serve amongst the soldiers of the Cross? That such was what had actually occurred was his full conviction after he had asked himself the preceding questions. Though Rotha, he thought, manifestly loathed his degraded animal form, and had probably vowed to ignore the existence of that, yet she, no doubt, loved his soul and yearned for its salvation. And God, in answer to her passionate intercession for its welfare, had been pleased to cause a vision of her own soul to appear to the object of her prayers, as a messenger from Jesus. It was, as speaking for Him, the Lover of the Soul, that she had said, "Oh, my love! if I but once get my arms round your neck you shall never leave me!"

Had the most gifted physician attempted, at that

moment, to convince Arthur that the experiences he regarded as supernatural were but the working of religious excitement, in connection with bodily disease, he would, undoubtedly, have failed to do so. Arthur was now too far gone in mental derangement to be open to any proof of his entertaining erroneous ideas upon the matter. He felt as if his mental eyes had been opened, and that he *saw* that his experiences *were* supernatural. And what was the purpose of these strange experiences? That God had chosen him for some special work he felt convinced: might it not be that he was destined, by some extraordinary affection of his body, to forcibly bring home to the thoughts of irreligious men in England the shocking sufferings that God incarnate endured for them upon the cross? He trembled with fear as, after reflection, he conceived it to be probable that such was to be his mission.

The morning had now dawned, and the eastern heavens were tinged with the hues of a gorgeous sunrise. Beholding the clouds of glowing red making "a tabernacle for the sun" reminded Arthur that the altars of Christian churches and their ministering priests are draped in silk of brilliant crimson on the feast-days of Martyrs. Disposed just then to see a special Providence in everything, this bright red sunrise had for him a solemn symbolical significance. It was God Himself seeking to inflame him with a martyr

spirit. And this impression was deepened, and awe and dread inspired in his soul, as in the sun's passage from the east it happened that the old mill on the common intervened between the crimson glory and his eyes. In the motionless arms of the windmill's sails he saw providentially held up before him a mighty St. Andrew's cross—that is, a huge figure of the X-shaped cross on which St. Andrew is said to have been crucified.

"But my God," cried Arthur, looking up to heaven fearfully, and clasping his hands beseechingly,—"but my God, St. Andrew, as his name implies, was a 'strong man,' and I am a miserably weak one." Divine Mercy seemed to him to give heed to his piteous remonstrance. The words, "My strength is made perfect in weakness," flashing upon his mind, infused some courage into his fainting heart, and made him resigned to the sufferings that he believed he saw awaiting him. In stern sincerity he then cried aloud,—

"Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee;
E'en though it *be* a cross
That raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer to Thee!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MISSION OF MADNESS.

After his night of strange experiences on Wimbledon Common, Arthur turned his steps homewards in the morning, sufficiently early to reach No. 1, Queen's Villas in time to wash himself and put on a clean shirt-collar before appearing at the breakfast-table. The excessive muscular exercise that he had undergone had considerably subdued the strange sensations that had caused him to subject himself to it, so that he managed to sit still for the short time that breakfast lasted.

To avoid the possibility of scandal, he thought it advisable to give some explanation to Mrs. De Vere and her daughter as to why he had stayed out all night, without having previously given to either of them the slightest intimation of his having any intention to do so. He informed them that the uncontrollable nervous restlessness that had compelled him to leave the dinner-table the preceding evening, and that he had gone out to try and walk off, had

grown worse as the evening advanced and night came on, until, at length, he felt as if he was being continuously and powerfully electrified. And he told them that, finding it consequently quite impossible to keep still, he had passed the night in pacing about Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common. But he said nothing to them about what he regarded as his nocturnal *supernatural* experiences. He was not yet too far gone in mental derangement to discern in what light these would appear to his hostess and her daughter.

Mrs. De Vere gave it as her opinion that Mr. Howard was threatened with an attack of St. Vitus's Dance. She strongly advised him to go and see the physician whom he told her that he had previously consulted with the Rev. Mr. Tudor. She urged him not to lose a moment, but to go directly after breakfast. Jemima also warmly recommended him to adopt her mother's advice. Thus persuaded, Arthur answered that he thought he *would* go to town and see Dr. Giffard that morning.

But after breakfast, having thought the matter over, he decided that he would not go and see Dr. Giffard, nor any other physician. The peculiar bodily disturbance from which he was suffering, he felt satisfied, on reflection, was simply a necessary accompaniment to a supernatural work that was going on in his soul. The interference of a doctor might, he considered, do him

more harm than good, for very possibly his nervous derangement was an instrumentality that was helping towards the realisation of the purposes of Providence in him.

"States of transition," he said to himself, mentally, "are proverbially morbid states, even when leading to higher developments. The man whose body and mind are adjusted in healthy equilibrium walks circumspectly. Correct reasoning leads him to prudent conduct. His calm intelligence in regulating his actions attaches a just importance to the instinct of self-preservation. But if humanity is to progress, heroism and martyrdom are imperatively demanded. How, then, are men of high intelligence to be induced to perpetrate these sublime follies? A special derangement of mental equilibrium in them has to be brought about. Heaven-sent terrors, for example, may make the other powers of their minds run away, like frightened horses, with their frigid coachman Intellect, and compel him, in his efforts at regaining control over them, to displays of magnificent daring.

"Who can reasonably doubt that many of the men and women who have become famous in the world's history, as great or as heroic, became so through flashes of madness revealing to them untrodden paths that to others were enveloped in darkness? If Jeanne

d'Arc had had a perfectly 'sound mind in a sound body,' would she ever have become the deliverer of France? If John Bunyan and Oliver Cromwell had been strangers to the divine madness caused by 'the terrors of the Lord,' would they ever have attained the immortality of fame? If John Howard had not possessed the insane temperament, would he not most likely have stayed quietly at home, instead of sacrificing himself in journeying through Europe seeking 'the house of woe'?

"Though, then, certain of my mental powers may be figuratively said to be running away with my intellect, as frightened horses with their coachman, it does not follow, necessarily, that there is anything in such a state of affairs to be deplored. They may be running away with me somewhere that my intellect, left to itself, would never have succeeded in discovering; I will not, therefore, seek the aid of medical science to stop them. I will leave them free to bear me onwards, at the express speed of the Flying Dutchman, towards the unknowable. And if, as they fly madly onwards and onwards, they take me through mysterious scenes, and lead me into terrible experiences, that, filling me with wonder and with awe, wring from my soul the cry, 'I am borne wildly, fearfully afar!' I will remember for my encouragement, and let my mind dwell upon, those strange words of Oliver Crom-

well, 'A man never rises so high as when he doesn't know where he is going.'

"Nor do I now think the Rev. Mr. Tudor, or any other priest, is likely to be able to act in a suitable way as my spiritual guide under the extraordinary circumstances in which I find myself placed. A voice within me, that I take to be a heavenly voice, seems to whisper to me that the Supreme Will is subjecting my own will to an ordeal fitting it to work with It in an exceptional and momentous work on earth—that I have a great prophetic mission to accomplish. My supernatural experiences during the past night favour that idea—for why should such mighty hosts of evil spirits have struggled so desperately to get possession of my soul? Manifestly they sought to destroy in his spiritual infancy one who, if suffered to remain in the service of God, would develop into an exceptionally terrible enemy of the Prince of Evil Spirits. I look upon myself, then, as one who is about to have a grand mission on earth assigned him as Envoy Extraordinary from the Court of Heaven. A priest can only be regarded as one of God's ordinary ambassadors—as one whose modes of proceeding are regulated by the etiquette of established ecclesiastical routine. But the prophet is one divinely sent to proclaim the will of the living God now—not His will as revealed in the past and handed down by tradition in His Church.

He speaks as one whose lips have been touched with fire from a celestial altar, and not from the altar of any temple made with hands. The priest, recognising in the prophet higher powers than his own, is, through human infirmity, naturally disposed to be jealous of him, and hence is quite unfit to be his spiritual guide. I resign myself, therefore, to do without any earthly director of my spiritual life: I am content to so live that, ultimately, I may add one more to the number of that select band who have had to say, when their work was done, 'I have trodden the wine-press alone.' Sufficient shall then be my reward if I have so succeeded in expressing from the ripe grapes of God the Wine of the Spirit of such unique richness and strength, that, drinking of it, the hearts of the sorrowing shall have been filled with gladness and the souls of the dying have rejoiced in new life."

These reflections passed through Arthur's mind as he was pacing up and down the garden just after breakfast. Immediately after making them he went into the house, and in a few minutes went out, with the intention of walking about and meditating in the more solitary parts of his favourite place of resort, Richmond Park.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ARTHUR LOSES HIS GLOVES.

At the time Arthur went out with the intention of going into Richmond Park, as has been stated that he did at the end of the last chapter, Mrs. De Vere was sitting in the dining-room, talking to her daughter about their eccentric boarder. They had both noticed him (the dining-room was at the back of the house), after walking up and down the garden for a little while, suddenly leave it, and shortly afterwards they heard the street door slammed to.

"I suppose Mr. Howard *is* going to town to see the physician, as we advised him to do," said Jemima to her mother.

"I suppose he is," answered Mrs. De Vere; "and I do hope Dr. Giffard will be able to do something for him to keep him from having St. Vitus's Dance. If he should become affected with it, I don't think that I should be able to keep him as a boarder—you know how sympathetic and sensitive my nerves are."

"Then if he gets St. Vitus's Dance he'll have to

dance off from here," said Jemima, laughingly, "and we shall then have to look out for another gentleman boarder. I only hope that we shall get one that's a little better company than Mr. Howard, and that does not give one the dismals to look at."

Jemima had scarcely finished speaking when the sound of a latch-key was heard in the street door.

"There's Mr. Howard coming back!" exclaimed Mrs. De Vere. "I suppose that he has forgotten something, as usual."

"His head, I shouldn't wonder," rejoined Jemima.

In a few moments Arthur entered the dining-room, holding in his hands a pair of kid gloves, one of which was almost split in two.

"I—I don't know to whom these gloves belong, I'm sure," he said, hesitatingly, and moving about nervously as if he was on wires; "but I have very stupidly taken them by mistake for my own from off the hall table. I didn't perceive they were not mine until, I am sorry to say, I split one in trying to get it on."

"Why, they're mine!" exclaimed Jemima.

"How came you to leave them on the hall table?" asked her mother.

"I don't know, ma. I suppose I must have laid them there when I came in yesterday afternoon, and forgot afterwards to take them up."

"As I'm afraid that I don't understand much about ladies' gloves," said Arthur, addressing Jemima, "would you mind buying a new pair for yourself, and have the cost of them put down in my account with your ma for this week? Of course, you know, I'll go at once and buy a pair for you, if it would be troubling you too much to go yourself."

"Oh, don't mention it, Mr. Howard: I would much prefer going and choosing them myself."

"Thank you. I'm very sorry to give you so much trouble. I suppose nobody happens to have seen my own gloves? It doesn't matter; it isn't cold; but still I thought perhaps you might—I might have dropped them, I mean." As he thus spoke confusedly, Arthur kept on hurriedly stroking his beard, twiddling his fingers, and tittuping about in a way that caused Jemima to tremble with suppressed laughter.

"I'm sure I have not seen your gloves, Mr. Howard," answered Mrs. De Vere. "Have you, Jemima?"

Jemima could not trust herself to answer for a moment or two. And when she did venture to open her mouth and say, "No, ma," she was unable to shut it again until the laughter within her, that was panting to escape, had rushed out, making an explosive sound.

"Jemima!" exclaimed Mrs. De Vere, in a tone of grieved remonstrance.

"Excuse me for laughing, Mr. Howard," said Jemima, experiencing great physical relief, but yet feeling vexed with herself; "but I couldn't help being amused at thinking that your gloves seem bewitched —you're always losing them."

Arthur felt that the proper thing for him to do to excuse Miss De Vere's hilarity was for him to laugh too. He made an hysterical attempt to do so, but the result was a ghastly failure.

"Let me come and see if I can find your gloves for you?" said Jemima, good-naturedly.

"No, don't trouble yourself, Miss De Vere. It doesn't signify. I can go out without them."

"Pray don't go out of my house without any gloves, Mr. Howard," remonstrated Mrs. De Vere, with dignity; "it's not *come eel faugh*. Jemima, my dear, go and see if you can find Mr. Howard's gloves for him."

Jemima went into the entrance hall, and rummaged amongst the contents of the drawer of the hall table, but to no purpose.

"You *have* felt in your pockets, I suppose?" she said to Arthur, who had followed her into the hall.

"Yes, they're not in any of my pockets."

"But what is that bulging out at the bottom of your paletôt, there? Let *me* see."

Jemima put her hand into the right-hand pocket of the overcoat Arthur had on, and found the pocket had

become unsewn at the bottom. Putting her hand through the hole thus made, she laid hold of Arthur's gloves, that had slipped down to the bottom of his coat, between the lining and the cloth.

"Why, Mr. Howard," exclaimed Jemima, holding up the gloves triumphantly, and then giving them to Arthur, "anybody would think that you were in love. Perhaps you *have* been crossed in love: that's what I begin to think must be the matter with you. There *is* somebody that you wanted to marry, that won't have anything to say to you—isn't there now?"

Arthur thought of Rotha, and felt that he could not conscientiously say "No," so he remained silent.

"Ah!" said Jemima, looking knowingly at Arthur, and holding up the forefinger of her right hand at him, "I have found you out, you see."

Arthur made no remark, but his face assumed a pained expression. Seeing the expression of his face, Jemima felt sorry that she had said what she had.

"You must try and cheer up," she said to him, following him to the front door-step; "all will very likely come right in time—at all events, we must hope so. 'Live in hope, if you die in despair.' I hope Dr. Giffard will be able to tell you of something to do you good."

"I'm not going to see Dr. Giffard. I'm only going for a walk in Richmond Park."

"Not going to see Dr. Giffard! I thought that you had decided to do so."

"I have altered my mind. On thinking the matter over, I have come to the conclusion that mine is not a case in which a doctor, however clever, could do any good, but is one in which he might possibly do serious harm."

"Now I know the cause of your being so upset," said Jemima, smiling significantly. "I begin to think that yours is a case in which doctors *could* do but little good."

Arthur made no response, but set off for Richmond Park.

"Well, did you find his gloves, after all?" inquired Mrs. De Vere of her daughter as the latter re-entered the dining-room.

"Oh, yes, such as they are," answered Jemima, laughing, and then explaining to her mother where they were.

"I'm glad that you have found them," said Mrs. De Vere; "it looks so low for any one to be seen going out of the principal entrance of my house without any gloves on."

"I don't know," rejoined Jemima, "but what he would have looked better without them than with them, they're so awfully baggy. And then he's gone off with them only half on his hands."

"I don't agree with you," answered Mrs. De Vere: "though baggy, they're still gloves; and even though he may wear them only half on his hands, yet that's to a certain extent a recognition of what's proper, just as merely part of the shutters of a shop being up on a Sunday is a recognition of the sacredness of the day. Did you notice whether he went towards the station?"

"No, he's gone to the park. He's not going to see Dr. Giffard, nor any other doctor, after all."

"Not going to see Dr. Giffard nor any other doctor! Really, I haven't patience with him. Here have I taken the trouble to go into his symptoms, and have given him my advice as if he were my own son: he leads me to believe that he's going to follow that advice, and set off to town directly after breakfast, to see his physician; and then, instead of doing so, he coolly goes off to 'moon' about the park. The Ritualists must have turned his brain, I think."

"It isn't the Ritualists, ma. I have found out what's the matter with him. He's been jilted."

"Has he just now admitted that to you, then?"

Jemima in reply told her mother what had just transpired, to convince her that Mr. Howard had been jilted.

"If he has been badly treated by some lady," said Mrs. De Vere, "then it's easy to understand how he

came to throw himself into the arms of the Ritualists. Disappointed in love, he seeks consolation in religion of an extreme kind. Have you any idea who the lady is?"

"Not the slightest. I should like to know, though, very much. I suppose it must be somebody who's quite a stranger to us."

"I suppose so."

There was a pause in their conversation. Mrs. De Vere and her daughter amused themselves for a few minutes in thinking of Mr. Howard's strange behaviour since he had lived with them under the new light they now conceived to be thrown upon it. As a sufferer from disappointment in love he became to them an object strongly deserving of their compassionate interest. Their reflections, however, did not lead to any interchange of ideas—no ideas on the subject that they thought worth mentioning occurring to either of them.

Mrs. De Vere was the first to speak again. "How much," she said, "did you give for those gloves that Mr. Howard mistook for his own?"

"Oh, they're only a cheap pair," answered Jemima. "I gave one and eleven pence three farthings for them."

"I should get a good pair this time, as Mr. Howard is to pay for them."

"Yes, I shall."

"You may as well get two pairs, I think, while you're about it. I shall only put down in Mr. Howard's account, 'gloves,' so much. I shall say nothing about how many pairs."

"In that case, it seems to me, I might as well get three pairs, ma?"

"Get three pairs, then, my child. I don't wish to stint you in gloves."

"Very well, ma."

"It's only right that he should be made to pay for his carelessness. He might have put you to great inconvenience," said Mrs. De Vere, as her eyes fell upon the gloves Arthur had come back with. "If your gloves had been dark green, like his own, I could have excused him, but——"

"Perhaps," interrupted Jemima, "he has something green in his eye."

"For mercy's sake, Jemima, take care what you are saying. I have rung some little time ago for the breakfast things to be cleared away. If you *must* use vulgar expressions at other times, do pray avoid doing so when you are likely to be heard by 'the domestics.'"

"Sarah Ann is so deaf that she could not hear me if she was just outside the door," retorted Jemima.

Sarah Ann, the only 'slavey' kept by Mrs. De

Vere, it so happened *was* outside the door at that moment, and entered the room just as Miss De Vere finished speaking. Though grandly referred to by her mistress as if she was of the plural number, the maid-of-all-work's personal appearance and carriage were singular. She was extremely stumpy and puffy; squinted frightfully; and, as she walked, waddled like a duck. Notwithstanding her diminutive stature, however, her mistress imaginatively realised her as having a dual personality. In reference to all her work in the bedrooms she was conceived of, and referred to, by Mrs. De Vere, as "my housemaid;" and in regard to all her duties in the kitchen as "my cook;" collectively she thus became "the domestics."

The entry of "the domestics" into the dining-room, to clear away the breakfast things, brought the talk of the two ladies concerning Mr. Howard to a close.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.

"Oh, Mr. Howard! do pray look what you're doing! You're spoiling my carpet!" almost screamed Mrs. De Vere. "Jemima, run and call out at the top of the kitchen stairs for Sarah Ann to bring a clean cloth here instantly."

Jemima ran out of the room, and did as she was bidden.

"I hope that it won't show much," said Arthur.

"The carpet is completely spoiled — *completely spoiled,*" answered Mrs. De Vere. "Why doesn't that tiresome girl come? What is she about, Jemima? Sarah Ann!"

This display of excitement took place in Mrs. De Vere's drawing-room one evening, about an hour after dinner, Arthur having accidentally, as he sat making strange gestures with his right hand while he held a cup of tea in his left that he was letting get cold, touched the top of the cup and upset it into his

saucer, so causing a great deal of tea to be spilled upon the carpet.

The servant, blamed by her mistress for her tardiness, having at length entered the room, began rubbing away at the carpet where the tea had been spilled, while Mrs. De Vere and her daughter stood looking on.

"Of course, Mrs. De Vere, I shall be quite willing to pay for any damage I may have done," said Arthur.

"We'll speak about that to-morrow, Mr. Howard," answered Mrs. De Vere.

Arthur then slipped out of the room.

"I said to you the other day, Jemima," remarked Mrs. De Vere, as soon as her boarder had gone, "that I knew Mr. Howard was going to have St. Vitus's dance; and now it has begun. His right hand was dancing away, while he sat staring at nothing, and, touching his teacup, of course over that went. I think, Sarah Ann, that if you get some hot water, and try and wash the tea out of the carpet, that will be the best thing to do."

"Yes, mum, I think it will," replied the servant, immediately leaving the room to get the hot water.

"I don't fancy that it will show scarcely at all when dry, if Sarah Ann washes it well with hot water," said Jemima to her mother.

"Ah, but it might have done so," answered Mrs.

De Vere. "I shall charge Mr. Howard for a new breadth of carpet."

"You should try, ma, and get him to make his hand dance and upset his tea over every breadth of carpet in the room, before you have done with him: that would be a paying game."

"Jemima, you really are incorrigible! 'Paying game!' I am truly shocked to hear such language made use of in my drawing-room. It is not *come eel faugh*, particularly for a young lady in your position. Do, pray, try and always remember that our family has *blood—Norman berlud.*"

"Don't talk like a fool, mother, or you'll get my blood up, and then I may say things that we shall both be sorry for afterwards. Norman blood, indeed!"

"Hush!" uttered Mrs. De Vere, holding up her forefinger and frowning. "I hear Sarah Ann coming with the hot water."

Arthur meanwhile had put on his hat and overcoat, and, umbrella in hand, had gone into the park. He was in a state of great exaltation. He now believed that it was revealed to him, through the direct inspiration of Heaven, that the millennium was at hand, and that he had been chosen as the one who was to take the first direct steps towards its being speedily established.

Absorbed in reverie, he, when he overturned his cup of tea, was prophesying to an imaginary audience, announcing the speedy overthrow of the kingdom of Satan. He was, he then thought, under celestial impulsion, rehearsing a part that he was about to perform before the world.

"Mine is a magnificent destiny," he exclaimed, as he walked in Richmond Park, along the road leading towards Roehampton; and he raised his eyes with delighted gratitude to Heaven for the immense honour he believed that it had conferred upon him.

The air was beautifully clear, and so he beheld above him a magnificent display of stars. This spectacle suggested to him the thought that what was required for the commencement of the millennium on the earth was, that the heavenly souls there—that is, souls having perfect purity of intention—should be enabled to regulate their movements with as exact a perfection of divine harmony as the host of glorious spheres he contemplated.

"And now," he said mentally, "that, through celestial illumination, the eyes of my mind plainly discern that the whole material universe is one vast system of symbolism, and that the heavenly bodies are symbols of heavenly souls, am I not in a position to spell out the knowledge necessary to be possessed by the latter that they may be brought into a har-

monious unity like the former? Man has now attained to a degree of knowledge about the heavenly bodies that even until quite recently was believed to be unattainable. By the deep consideration of this knowledge, under its spiritually symbolic aspect, may I not be led to an acquaintance with the occult form of the attraction of gravitation by which heavenly souls should voluntarily regulate their movements?"

Having asked himself this question, he meditated upon it for a while, becoming as he did so more and more assured that it must be answered in the affirmative. At length, yielding to what he believed to be a heavenly supernatural influence, he felt compelled to return home, to apply himself at once to the fervent study, as spiritually symbolic books, of the various works that he possessed on modern astronomy.

When he reached home he was in such a state of exulting excitement that he could not make his latch-key turn in the patent spring lock, and was consequently obliged to knock at the door. Sarah Ann had not yet gone to bed, and opened the door for him.

In a most elated manner Arthur crossed the entrance hall and tripped upstairs, causing Sarah Ann to feel very much inclined to doubt whether the spring lock really was out of order. To satisfy herself upon this point, she set about testing the lock with

April morning to Leicester Square. Should opportunity favour him, he not only intended to look upon the gifted revolutionary author, but also to get into conversation with him.

But though the sun shone brightly upon M. Dubois that morning, fickle Fortune did *not* condescend to smile upon him. From some cause or other the eminent revolutionary author had not made his appearance in the garden, even when the time had passed at which it was his custom to leave it. Still, M. Dubois determined to wait in hope, and sitting down on a bench, amused himself by playing with his dog.

He had not long been thus engaged when, somewhat to his astonishment, his friend Arthur Howard came up to him eagerly, and held out his hand. The usual civilities at the meeting of friends having been exchanged between them, M. Dubois said,—

"And, pray, what brings you up, may I ask, from Richmond to Leicester Square on a Sunday morning?"

"Oh, I daresay you will be rather surprised when I tell you: but amongst the gossip in a weekly paper, that I saw yesterday evening, it was stated that the celebrated revolutionary writer, M. Rougetnoir, was staying in Leicester Square, and often walked in this garden and smoked his cigarette of a morning. I came

up in the hope that I might, perhaps, manage to get him pointed out to me, and then contrive to get into conversation with him. I——"

"How very odd!" interrupted M. Dubois, laughingly. "I also have come here in the hope of seeing M. Rougetnoir; but I never dreamed that you cared about him or his works."

"I admit that I have not done so hitherto: but I have heard you often praise him as a revolutionary writer, and as I have made a most remarkable discovery, by which an immense revolutionary change for the better in the condition of humanity may easily be brought about, I thought he might be willing to give me the aid of his pen in making this discovery known to the world."

M. Dubois raised his eyebrows, stared at Arthur, and then said, "I never expected to hear that you had turned revolutionist. But if your object in coming here was merely to see M. Rougetnoir, I am afraid that you have made your journey from Richmond in vain. He has not been here this morning, and I don't fancy that now there's any likelihood of his coming."

"Do you think you could manage to obtain for me an introduction to him, at wherever he may be staying?" asked Arthur, eagerly.

"No; he's not a personal friend of mine," answered

M. Dubois, in a manner as if he felt rather perplexed as to his friend's state of mind. He began to suspect that he was suffering from the effects of an over-wrought brain. But as he had himself an almost monomaniacal love of revolutionary movements, and the wilder they were the better he liked them, he felt a very great curiosity to know what Arthur's scheme was, so he said to him, after pausing a moment or two,—

"I should like very much to know the nature of that great revolutionary change that you think has now become a possibility."

"Certainly, if you can spare me a little time I will explain it to you. But if you would thoroughly understand it, you must excuse me being a little tedious," said Arthur, sitting down on the bench beside his friend. He had now come to the conclusion that M. Dubois had been specially thrown in his way by Providence, in order that his great discovery might be imparted to him.

"You needn't apologise for taking up a little of my time," said M. Dubois; "I'm not at all in a hurry."

But the professor's dog did not at all approve of its master being interrupted in playing with it. To attract his attention from Arthur to itself, the vivacious animal just then began wildly jumping about, in front of the bench, and barking in a most noisy manner—it was a

French dog. To attempt to make himself heard under such circumstances Arthur knew would result only in his quickly becoming hoarse, so he remained silent while M. Dubois was engaged trying to quiet his poodle. Waiting for the professor to succeed, he took the opportunity of thinking about the best manner of opening his subject to his friend. He had prepared himself to speak upon his discovery to a stranger, and found what he contemplated saying not quite adapted to be addressed to a familiar friend.

When M. Dubois had at length succeeded in getting his dog to lie quietly by his side, he naturally turned his face towards his friend. He found him gazing abstractedly at the marble statue of Shakespeare that occupies the centre of the public garden in the square, and in the front of which they were sitting. The poet is represented as pointing to an unrolled scroll, on which is inscribed, in letters of gold, "There is no darkness but ignorance."

"Ah!" said the professor to Arthur, "I see that you are performing your devotions at the shrine of your divine Shakespeare. To set up a statue of him here, pointing to those words of his upon that opened scroll, was a very happy idea of whoever conceived it. What could be better calculated to cheer the hearts and infuse new courage into the souls of the many exiled patriots of my native country that inhabit this

locality? Amidst the appalling gloom of a London winter, it is only natural that we Frenchmen should sometimes think, with bitter regret, of the sunshine of our own sunny France. But those words of the grand Shakespeare, brought prominently before our minds, suggest to us a thought of lofty consolation, especially to those who are here as exiled revolutionists. Our countrymen who have banished us may have driven us from the light of the sun, yet who, after all, is most in the dark—the banishers or the banished? In reply, that martyr-child of the Revolution, the Communist exile of Leicester Square, may now, with reason, even in a London fog, raise his hat to this statue of the immortal Bard of Avon, as a mark of his gratitude, and, drawing himself proudly up to his full height, exclaim, in noble exultation, 'There is no darkness but *ignorance*—la lumière c'est moi.'"

"Unlike Malvolio," rejoined Arthur, "your Communist has no difficulty in believing darkness to be light. He must be really in the mental state Malvolio was falsely treated as being. But I was just thinking, when you spoke to me, that, unless I am greatly mistaken, your idea of ignorance is one quite at variance with my own. From previous conversations that I remember having with you, I am led to conclude that you conceive ignorance to be all that the mind

cannot *see;* that where the scientific intellect cannot penetrate, there to man is darkness. I object to this view, that blindness is not the same thing as ignorance, and that in the mental world, as Shakespeare says, 'there is no darkness but ignorance.' For when scientific intellect proclaims that what it cannot see is unknowable—is a darkness, it is ignoring the experiences of the moral and emotional parts of the mind. Mind is not all intellect: intellect is only the seeing part of the mind. Things that cannot be mentally *seen*, may hence yet possibly become known to the mind—it may, by feeling, fumble its way far beyond the region where *intellectual* light extends. Let me give you an example of what I mean. I am in doubt, say, as to the *rightfulness* of a certain course of action that it would be to my interest to pursue, and I therefore consult a highly philosophic friend upon the subject. So far as my intellect is concerned, he demonstrates to me irrefragably that the course of action referred to would be a right one for me to follow. But when I proceed *to act* according to his opinion, moral feeling unmistakably gives me evidence that I am outraging it, yet my intellect still exerts itself in vain to find a single flaw in my friend's reasoning. Would you, then, deny that, in such a case, my mind, through moral feeling, apprehends something greater than its purely intellectual

part has succeeded in doing; that my mind, though suffering from intellectual blindness in a particular matter, is, as a whole, practically free from the darkness of ignorance concerning it?"

"My dear friend, I fear, from the tone of your remarks, that you must have misunderstood me in previous conversations that we have had. You seem to think that I entertain philosophical opinions logically leading to the conclusion that Virtue is the agreement of Will with Intellect. I assure you that is not so. I fully accept the definition of Virtue given by Buddha, as being the agreement of the Will with the Conscience. I accept Conscience as just as much an ultimate fact in Nature as Gravitation."

"I am glad to hear you say so," rejoined Arthur, the expression of whose face suddenly brightened as M. Dubois uttered the word *gravitation*. "From the last of your remarks," he continued, "I am led to ask whether you discern any relation between Conscience and Gravitation—whether, I mean, you see in the workings of the moral nature of man any evidence of the existence of a more occult form of gravitation than was dreamt of by Sir Isaac Newton?"

"Not at all," replied M. Dubois, raising his eyebrows and staring at his friend. "I mentioned gravitation simply as an example of an ultimate fact in Nature, nothing more."

"Then you are about to hear for the first time of a very startling discovery in regard to a mysterious form of the attraction of gravitation. It is through that discovery that that great revolution for the better in the condition of humanity to which I have referred is to be brought about. In consideration of the difficulty of setting forth my subject, excuse me if, in seeking to explain it clearly to you, I am less concise than it would be desirable that otherwise I should be."

"Oh, certainly," answered M. Dubois, who thought that decidedly there *was* something very strange about his friend's way of talking to-day.

"Without further preface, then," said Arthur, "I will set about my exposition of this great discovery."

Arthur then commenced to address his friend in the manner that will be found reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE.

"The most elaborate and special display of Nature's formative power," said Arthur to M. Dubois, as they sat in the public garden in Leicester Square, "is seen in man: the most simple and universal display of her formative power is seen in all particles of matter tending to unite and to press inwards; that is, in the working of the attraction of gravitation. This form of Energy groups particles of matter throughout the universe into the shape of spheres, and guides the motions that are observed to take place amongst those bodies. The exquisite precision, the wonderful harmony of those motions, have inspired some of the sublimest passages in the works of the sublimest poets. But when we turn from contemplating this harmony to the discord and confusion that reign amongst men, the contrast is a distressing one. 'Our lives are not in the harmonies of things' is the melancholy reflection wrung from our souls.

"But that 'music of the spheres'—the music of

millions of millions of spheres — now resounding throughout space was not attained to all at once; long ages of abortive tentative efforts were required before the development of such perfection was attained to. And this perfection in the results of the operation of law, remember, has been attained by Nature only in the display of this, the simplest kind of her formative power. May it not well be, then, that man feels himself a discord amidst such music, because as yet he is in a very early stage of the evolution of his kind, because ages are yet required to evolve human order out of human chaos, and to enable self-conscious mind to succeed, like gravitation, in realising itself in forms acting in perfect harmony with one another throughout the universe?"

"I conceive it possible," answered the professor, "that, by the aid of science, an intellectual millennium may be ultimately realised by man upon the earth; that the same result may be attained by intelligent beings on other globes; and that some mode of communication between the intelligent inhabitants of different globes may be discovered. But continue, Mr. Howard."

"The view I suggest," then continued Arthur, "is favoured by the remarkable fact that there is a direct resemblance between the elementary display of Nature's formative power and her most highly

elaborate one. This I will next try and make clear to you. Nature's most highly elaborate formation, endowed with far-reaching eyes and the power of aiding them by ingenious inventions, looking from the earth upon the nearest of the spheres that people space, discovers that none of its matter is now made the instrument of feeling or thought: the moon appears to man to have no life upon it. The earth, abounding with excess of diversified life that finds its ultimate manifestation in an attempted deification of material form, has ever by its side, as the companion of its etherial voyages, a globe no particles of whose substance can feel the sun's genial warmth or see his glorious light. A floating arid desert hovers, in glaring contrast, continually around the sphere where animated existences revel in countless kinds and numbers. Yet this lifeless globe gives, in a rude way, a representation of Nature's elementary idea of the living head of him who contemplates it. Just as I see that my hands are but modifications of the flippers of a seal, or of the wings of a bat, so do I also see that the globe I term my head is but a modification of such a globe as that called the moon."

"The enormous difference in size between them makes the comparison seem a droll one," said M. Dubois, laughing, who now felt sure that his friend must be suffering from an overwrought brain.

"But it will cease to seem so," replied Arthur, "if you think of the difference between them as one of quality, and not of quantity. Let my head represent that of a Newton, and what is the whole mass of dead matter in the moon compared to it? To ask the question is to see that our extreme regard for mere bigness is a childish feeling, no doubt handed down to us from our brute ancestors. Masses of matter, by their mere bigness, ought not to be suffered to bully our minds into undervaluing their own greatness."

"Well, then, go on with your comparison of the moon to your head," said M. Dubois.

"By some incomprehensible power of attraction termed gravitation," then said Arthur, "the particles of matter composing the moon have grouped themselves into a sphere. From the working of the same mysterious form of Energy, this sphere is exerting a direct attractive force upon the earth, and it attracts it as if all its matter were condensed into a single point at its centre. This centre of gravity, this mathematical point, is the centre of unity of all the particles of matter composing the moon. But that around which they have adjusted themselves is an ideal; for matter is that which occupies space, and a mathematical point does not do so: it has neither length, breadth, nor thickness; it has position, but no magnitude. A point ceases to be a point if one

tries to give it even the minutest representative extension, and becomes a disc. And this point, or centre, of unity in the moon is so situated that any plane that passes through it divides that globe into two hemispheres, each in weight exactly equal to the other. Now my brain also consists of two hemispheres, each, in a complex variety of ways though, equal to the other. And the special adjustment of the particles of matter composing my two cerebral hemispheres results in a centre of unity that (though of a kind proportionately higher, with their complexity of structure, than the hemispheres of the moon) is like the moon's centre of gravity, an ideal thing. My mental personality—that within me that is able to say 'I,' like a mathematical point, cannot be thought of as having extension: it is like a centre of gravity, an indivisible unity of power; it is the point become self-conscious.

"We see, then, that in the development of the cosmos points, ceasing to be mere abstractions, become first evolved into unities of physical force, and 'the music of the spheres' is the result of that evolution. Does not analogy, then, point to the conclusion that the ultimate development of the self-conscious points shall be the manifestation of some such magnificent harmony in the universe of mind? The very fact that gravitation is the most universal form of Energy,

and that the centre of gravity in any body is universally so situated that any plane passing through it divides that body into segments of exactly equal weight, seems to proclaim that Nature's central idea is to realise an absolute perfection of equilibrium and a harmonious unity between identical parts of her works. At least, as 'extremes meet,' it appears natural to conclude that such equilibrium and harmonious unity will be ultimately attained by those parts of her works, the functions of which consist in the manifestation of units of consciousness, they being the highest extreme of the manifestation of her formative power, as combinations of atoms around centres of gravity are her lowest.

"And that such is Nature's central idea in regard to human units is abundantly manifest. They are so constituted that a grand passion, or a lofty emotion, dissolves the solitary iceberg of self in the ocean of a common humanity. A universal passion of man is love, or the romantic attachment of the sexes. This makes selfish isolation impracticable to the majority of human personalities, and leads them into the closest of unions. Through it two distinct individualities become one, just as through the agitation of a leaf by the wind two drops of dew on it flow together, and mutually mould themselves into one larger sparkling globule."

"You talk like that about marriage, Mr. Howard, because you are a bachelor," said the professor, chaffingly. He fancied his friend had become queer in his head, from too long brooding upon one idea, and that it would be a kindly act to seek to distract his mind from its 'rage for thinking' about gravitation and the unity of Nature, and to amuse it with a little nonsense.

"Well, then," replied Arthur, "if you think that the figure of speech I made use of to illustrate the closeness of the union of man and wife a too extreme one, I will withdraw it for another one. I will compare man and wife to a binary star, to a star existing in two portions, yet exerting the attraction of gravitation upon other heavenly bodies from a centre of gravity between its married halves as if they were but one larger sphere. The realised ideal of love is a binary soul."

"*There* is such a binary soul in process of development," jocosely said M. Dubois, looking towards a seat almost facing them, but some little distance from them, on which was a youthful soldier with his arm round the waist of a servant-girl who sat by him. The girl was gazing at the red-coated son of Mars with an expression of sweetly trusting adoration.

"Yes," said Arthur, in answer to the professor's remark, as he looked towards the loving pair; "and do you notice that the girl has her prayer-book lying

by her side on the seat. No doubt she has been sent to go to church by her mistress, and has come love-making instead, at the risk of getting herself into great trouble, if found out. Her conduct affords an illustration how love tends to throw to the winds the mere calculations of selfish prudence, and to revel in a reckless disregard of commonplace dangers; how it generates that spirit of voluntary sacrifice that is seen displayed on a grander scale in religious enthusiasm."

The direction of Arthur's thoughts to the subject of self-sacrificing enthusiasm, combined with the stimulating effect upon his eyes of the bright *red* colour of the soldier's coat, caused him, suddenly and vividly, to recollect his strange state of exaltation the evening of his first visit to Canterbury, when meditating in the corn-field facing the Grapes Tavern.

"How," he said, broodingly, after being silent for a moment or two,—"how are we to explain the extraordinary predilection that girls have for men in *red* coats? Is it *merely* an instinctive feeling, that has come down to them from those early times when our brute male ancestors fought with one another for possession of their females, and the victors came to their loves with their hides dyed red in the blood of the vanquished? It may be presumed the lady-beasts felt proud at having lovers who were conquerors, and who had fought and suffered for them; the gory skins

of the victors would hence be a joy to their eyes. Is there a reverberation of such far-off ancestral experiences to be discerned in the adoring look that girl is casting upon her *red*-coated lover?"

"Such a notion, I fancy, is quite orthodoxly Darwinian," answered M. Dubois. And then, still aiming at causing his friend to think about amusing nonsense, he added laughingly, "Perhaps you can see a survival of something of the same kind as you have just mentioned in the busbies worn by some of your soldiers?"

"Why not?" answered Arthur. "It may be assumed that it once became a custom amongst our ape-man progenitors that when, of two rival suitors duelling for a female, one chanced to be slain, the victor brought the hairy skin of the slain one as a trophy to his love. She no doubt would often, from timidity, have kept at some little distance off from where the combat took place. What more probable than that, when she did so, the victor should carry his hairy trophy to her, rolled up in a bundle on his head?"

"Looking very like a busby!" exclaimed the professor, laughing. "But you see, the love of the sexes encourages discord and disunion, as well as acting in a contrary way. It is intimately associated with the fighting instinct, as you, who are a reader of Mr. Darwin, should be aware."

"No doubt that it is so; but ultimately, at least, as so extraordinarily developed as it is amongst men, the fighting instinct itself is made subservient to realising what Nature in multiform ways—as shown in dew-drops, crystals, suns, solar-systems, self-conscious personalities, families, tribes, nations—seems always to be aiming at,—the development of unities. From the love of the sexes springs the family; from the family the tribe; and from the tribe the nation. But the conflicting interests of the multitude of different units that compose a nation tend to destroy its perfect oneness. Let, however, the very existence of the nation itself be menaced by an enemy, and the distracting din of unnumbered clashing petty interests is hushed to silence, and millions of hearts are heard throbbing but as one mighty heart stirred by heroic passion. The fighting instinct of a whole nation fully aroused fuses its separated portions into one glowing mass. And what, in its way, can be a more magnificent human reflection of the sublimely immutable order of Nature than a highly disciplined army acting with rigidly implicit obedience to the commands of its head captain as if it were but a single mighty organism? And how absolutely perfect becomes the *oneness of spirit* between the naturally highly differing units of which an army must consist, when it fulfils the terrible function for which armies

are created! The pangs of hunger and of thirst—sorrow, disease—the consciousness of these, and all other things, are swallowed up in that of the fierce intoxicating joy of battle. Though the 'windows of heaven' are opened, and rain descends upon the combatants as if a second deluge was about to drown them and the world, it cannot quench the consuming flames of their heroic rage. Though the solid earth quakes, and threatens to swallow them up like some brute mother in terror for her young, they, in their sublime recklessness of the fate of Self, laugh old mother Earth to scorn."

"You remind me," interrupted M. Dubois, "of the well-known passage in Livy on the armies engaged in the battle of Thrasimene, which I have somewhere seen translated thus:—'And such was their mutual animosity, so intent were they upon the battle, that the earthquake, which overthrew in great part many of the cities of Italy, which turned the course of rapid streams, poured back the sea upon the rivers, and tore down the very mountains, was not felt by either of the combatants.'"

"Thank you for the quotation," said Arthur; "it supplies an apt illustration of the oneness of spirit produced amongst vast numbers of naturally differing individuals through war. And in Roman history we see a more universal idea than that of merely *national*

union realised amongst men through war: through it Pagan Rome became the centre of unity to a vast number of nations. That vast unity of men was, however, from its nature, only of a temporary character, and it only prepared the way for an international unity amongst them of a higher kind. It was not itself based upon a living relationship with Nature's elemental unit of social union, the family. Its international parts were knocked together, not drawn together by attraction. It lacked the moral gravitation of love operating between the souls composing it and drawing them into harmonious unity. The tree of human progress was by it cut off from its life-giving root, and fabricated into a splendid imperial coffin.

"Their nobler instincts corrupted by the example of purely brutal social union set them by the State, the degraded later Pagan Romans would not incur the moral restraints of marriage, and thus led the way to the dissolution of the Empire by their dissoluteness. Instead of the society of chaste wives, and the holy discipline of the family, they preferred the companionship of harlots and the excitement of brutalising pleasures. Vice is sterile. It is wives, not harlots, that are as fruitful vines. The supply of little Romans to be trained as soldiers to defend Rome failed; and foreign mercenaries at length supplied the place of

native warriors; then outraged Nature uttered the cry,—

"'Arise, ye Goths, and glut your ire!'"

As he declaimed the quotation from "Childe Harold," Arthur raised his right hand high above his head, and shook it in an excited manner.

"Tranquillise yourself, my dear Mr. Howard! tranquillise yourself!" said the professor; "you are producing quite a sensation in the square. There are a rare lot of suspicious-looking roughs lounging about here, that look quite as ready, if you excite them to it, to rise and 'glut their ire' upon a rotten civilisation as the Goths were. A policeman, too, is very near: you will get accused of uttering seditious cries, if you don't mind."

"Oh! our police don't take any notice of such matters. You shouldn't look at things here through French spectacles."

M. Dubois, naturally, did not like being thus snubbed; but he excused his friend, because he saw he was suffering from mental disorder.

"If you will give me a minute or two more," continued Arthur, "I will bring my remarks in reference to spiritual gravitation to a close."

"All right," answered M. Dubois, encouragingly. Having decided that Arthur was in a state in which he required being taken care of, he was mentally

debating what steps he had better take in regard to him.

"I have spoken of Pagan Rome," Arthur went on, "as having fabricated the tree of human progress into a coffin; but it was a coffin like a chrysalis, that breaks open to let rise from it a 'winged Psyche.' Pent-up humanity, denied the natural freedom of the poor crawling caterpillar, burst forth from its shell in possession of the moral freedom of an angel. A universal empire of brute force, a mechanical union of nations, prepared the way for a moral international union amongst men. It levelled and harrowed a vast human field ready for the seeds of Christianity to be sown and to germinate in, and to spring up in crops of golden wheat, too great for hordes of brutal soldiers to trample under foot. The centralisation of Pagan Rome broke asunder and perished because it lost all reverence for the sacred elemental unit of living union amongst men—the family. The international moral union that arose from its ruins exalted the sacred elemental social idea into an universal one. Its sublime aim was to make of all men loving righteousness, whether slaves or nobles, whether barbarous or civilised, a cosmopolitan Holy Family, the members of which, held closely together by the attraction of love, should present a transcendent manifestation of the divine unity in creation to miserable communities

that, through the repulsion of hate, existed but to war cruelly with one another."

"But that," said the professor, in a manner showing some slight impatience, "was a brilliant dream that the experience of many centuries has shown to be incapable of realisation. No doubt, however, the Christian idea of making a universal spiritual family of members, taken from all the nations of the earth, has played an important part in the development of pre-scientific humanity—the scheme has great interest, *historically* considered."

"According to your belief, then," inquired Arthur, "the light of modern knowledge exhibits the idea of all good men in the world being drawn and held together by the moral gravitation of love in a grand international union as one that must now be definitely abandoned?"

"Christianity, I believe," answered M. Dubois, "is dying out, like the antique Paganism; but, no doubt, for a very long time it must have a sort of half-belief amongst numbers of the unscientific portion of mankind. Society is only learning to do without a belief in the supernatural, and is very naturally, seeing how difficult its task is, learning to do so but slowly. Because, however, in this particular it is learning slowly, I apprehend it is doing so surely; and I think I may safely predict an international society for the

promotion of culture to be the Church of the Future. Meanwhile, until superstition has been effectually extirpated, the Church of the Past must necessarily be suffered to perpetrate the mockery of 'business as usual during the alterations.'"

"But," rejoined Arthur, "an international society for the promotion of culture would not present the spectacle of a great union of men closely knit together by moral bonds. Besides, culture, absorbingly pursued as an end in itself, tends to make men cold-hearted, fastidious egotists. It freezes the individual drops of humanity into globules of ice, instead of moving them to combine into one running stream, mingling its waters with the ocean of universal being. Intellectual light is no substitute for moral heat. Culture, then, as the 'claimant' of the domain of Christianity, is as palpably an impostor as that clever convict who is the 'Claimant' of the Tichborne estates. Certainly, culture, like Christianity, begins with a C: but I should like to know what right it has to that big C that it now often pretentiously assumes in print?"

Breaking off in a tetchy manner, Arthur paused for a reply.

M. Dubois smiled good-humouredly, and said, "I am afraid, Howard, that you cannot have studied the works of Mr. Matthew Arnold very attentively?"

"O yes, I have; and in them I seem to see Culture,

like an ineffable beauty, sweetly smirking at me behind her fan; but she utterly fails to win my heart. But tell me, now, do you really believe that scientific progress condemns humanity to fall back upon nationality as the noblest attainable kind of unity amongst men?"

"For the present, yes; with the prospect of a grand federation of nations in the future."

"Do you, then, think that progressive development upon the surface of the earth has probably reached its culminating point, and that retrogressive evolution may have commenced?"

"No, I see no sufficient evidence as yet for thinking that."

"Surely, then, your idea about the State being the highest form of union to which men can now aspire is not in accord with the apparent fact that we *are* living still under a progressive order of development. In social development the family prepared the way for the tribe, the tribe for the nation, the nation for the universal empire, the universal empire for the universal Church, or international spiritual family. This seems breaking up, because the old Christian beliefs that all things were made solely for man, as the unique offspring and pet of an Almighty Father, and that man's dwelling-place is the centre of the universe, science has now taught us to regard as beliefs

belonging to an infantile stage of human mental development, like unto the mental condition of a baby delighted at having just learnt to say 'dada,' and to whom the centre of all things is its nursery. Imaginative scientific insight, aided by the marvellous knowledge attained through modern telescopes and spectrum analysis, now exhibits to us a universe in which spheres in countless numbers are mentally seen revolving throughout space, on the surfaces of which matter has been evolved into such exquisite translucency as to permit eternal living spirit to shine through it. For although, amongst the planets of the sun-stars, the ones aglow with life may be far apart, and rare as on earth are diamonds of the purest water, yet, as Mr. Proctor teaches, that would not prevent their number being countless, seeing that space is infinite. In the tiara of the Infinite, then, the earth no longer dazzles our eyes as its central gem, but is seen in it as a very tiny crystal, almost lost amidst a refulgent galaxy of koh-i-noors. The teaching of the universal Church in regard to man, and his position in the universe is, it must now be admitted, glaringly out of harmony with the beliefs of the *progressing* portion of humanity. Should we not, then, if we believe we are still living under a progressive order of things, judging from the past order of social evolution, look for the international society called the Christian

kind, spiritual gravitation calls for a Newton to explain its facts and principles, and I, the discoverer of it, unlike Sir Isaac, am unfortunately not a mathematician. It will be imperatively necessary for me to be assisted by one in writing the 'New Principia,' and I should like to engage you professionally to aid me."

"I shall be very happy to give you my poor services," said the professor.

"Don't talk about giving," said Arthur; "you shall have half the profits of the work as your honorarium."

"One-third, I'm sure, would be ample. You are the discoverer: I shall be merely your assistant."

"No; I shall insist upon your receiving half the profits," replied Arthur, decisively. "Remember that you have a wife and children, and that you ought not to sacrifice their interests to a too modest estimate of your own abilities."

"Very well, then: not wishing to be accused of doing injustice to my family, I waive my objection to receiving half the profits of the 'New Principia.'"

"And your name shall appear with mine upon the title-page," said Arthur. "I always had an idea that something extraordinary was to result from our friendship. An intellectual marriage between two such minds as ours is what the age demands. You possess mathematical skill and learning: I poetic insight. Your life has been given more particularly to the

study of the relations between the point *Here* and the circumference *There*, or between other hypothetically separated portions of the Infinite: mine rather to the considerations of the relations between the instant *Now* and the two Eternities of the Past and Future. The mathematical and the poetic are the two grand divisions of Intellect in its highest manifestations. But Intellect, that is pre-eminently the seeing faculty of mind, unhappily looks different ways in the mathematician and the poet, and its perceptions are hence at variance. At present man intellectually squints at the universe. Our task is the all-important and beneficent one of giving these squinting eyes the same focus; then ultimate truth will be seen to be one, though having two faces, for the Infinite and the Eternal are one. Our names, my dear friend, will be immortalised together."

"Our task, however, is a difficult one," said the professor. "It will be necessary for us quietly to discuss it together in a way that we can hardly do in a public place like this. Suppose, to do so, you come home with me to my lodgings in Gray's Inn Road, and dine with myself and family. In the afternoon, as I want to give my wife a little change, we will, if agreeable to you, all go down to Richmond together."

"I shall be happy to come home with you," said

Arthur, "to discuss more in detail what is necessary for us to do, in order adequately to fulfil our all-important task; but you must excuse me leaving you in the afternoon, as I purpose then giving a discourse on spiritual gravitation on Clerkenwell Green. Through you the discovery of it will be made known to the rich; but I feel it a solemn duty to make the poor also, through the medium of open-air addresses, acquainted with the discovery with the least delay avoidable, and Clerkenwell Green is a place where meetings are permitted by the police."

"Well, at all events, you will come home with me first," answered M. Dubois, whose sole anxiety was to get his friend to his home, that Mme. Dubois might see him, and advise what steps had better be taken on account of his illness.

M. Dubois, as he spoke, rose from the bench on which he and his friend had been sitting. Arthur followed his example, and he and his companion walked arm-in-arm out of the garden.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PROPHETICAL MANIA.

ARTHUR and his friend were proceeding quickly, on the left-hand side of the street, along Long Acre, on their way to Gray's Inn Road, when, just before they arrived at the corner of Drury Lane, a Frenchman who was a particular acquaintance of M. Dubois met them. The two Frenchmen soon got into very animated conversation on the political affairs of their own country, and Arthur was left standing forgotten and unnoticed. Standing idly waiting did not at all accord with the humour he was in: he was burning with impatience to harangue an audience on Clerkenwell Green. The professor and his French friend, too, grew very excited, and it seemed highly improbable that they would soon bring their conversation to an end. Under these circumstances Arthur impulsively decided to start off to Clerkenwell Green by himself unnoticed. M. Dubois would, no doubt, be rather offended with him for so doing; but any such objec-

tion was not worth considering. He must be prepared to sacrifice friendship, everything, to speedily accomplish his mission. As for food, it would be time enough to think about that when he was thoroughly exhausted and unable to speak.

He looked at M. Dubois, and at the moment that he did so he found that, instead of noticing him, his friend was fully occupied in regarding his compatriot with almost menacing expression, in gesticulating at him energetically, and in contradicting some affirmation of his by shouting, at the top of his voice, "Jamais! jamais! jamais!" Arthur seized the opportunity to get away unnoticed, and sharply turning the corner into Drury Lane, set off running towards Broad Street. On reaching there he inquired the way to Clerkenwell Green, and immediately after started for it as directed.

His cerebral excitement rapidly increased as he hurried along, and as it did so his conception of the grandeur of the mission imposed upon him by Heaven grew higher and higher. "Upon its success," so ran his thoughts, "depends the salvation of modern Christian civilisation. Man is in extreme peril of missing the supreme purpose of his existence. The *élite* of humanity now deridingly term Him, whom they were expressly created to know and to serve, *the* Unknowable. Those of the *prolétariat* who can think, robbed by materialistic philosophy of the hope of a heaven beyond

the grave, combine into secret societies to enable them, ultimately, to rob the rich and get their own heaven here. The condition of man accepted as the result of accident, his sufferings become meaningless. If they do not form part of the moral discipline of a heavenly Father, why should they be borne patiently? The few singular worshippers of abstractions who form the 'we' of Dr. Strauss's Confession may fancy they love and venerate the mere essence of the forces and laws of the universe, but ordinary people cannot do so: it has not for them the love-exciting qualities. Their hearts demand a truly love-inspiring Being as an object of their adoring affection. Let the Eternal Cause be revealed to them as such a Being, and the weakest and the meanest may learn then to rejoice in suffering. Endured for love, suffering becomes the highest utterance of itself of which love is capable. The love for a love-inspiring personality that can fully express itself in *words* is but a theatric simulation of profound passion. 'Can you rejoice in suffering with and for *me?*' To be able by *deed* joyously to answer 'yes' to that question is the proof that one truly loves."

There was a break in the flow of his reflections, and then it seemed to him that a Divine Voice within his soul said to him, "Can you rejoice in suffering with and for *Me?*" and in spirit he replied by rapturously

signifying his eagerness to do so. To give an external sign of his willingness, he took from his bosom a crucifix that had been given to him by Mr. Tudor, shortly after the making of his general confession, as a *souvenir* of that act of penitence, and that he wore concealed beneath his waistcoat, suspended from his neck by a crimson silk ribbon. This crucifix he now let hang outside his waistcoat, his paletôt and undercoat being unbuttoned, that everybody might see that he had taken service as a soldier of the Cross.

As he thus walked rapidly along, the delirious workings of his mind again assumed the form of some interior voice addressing him—the voice this time, he thought, of a warlike angel, that had been sent to him from Heaven on a special mission to inspire him with the desperate courage needed by him to accomplish that mighty work that had been given him to do.

"The compromising, half-hearted Christianity of the day," said the supposed angelic interior voice, "shows itself to be miserably incapable of resisting the assaults of its destructive enemies. The Church militant, understanding by that all the baptized, urgently needs to establish direct communications with the 'noble army of martyrs,' that it may become inflamed with their burning, self-sacrificing love. This conscious communion in spirit

with the earth's religious martyrs of nobler times can only be realised by Christians attaining a knowledge of spiritual gravitation, and by their making a practical spiritual application of that knowledge. But how is the Christian world to be effectually taught that knowledge? In what way can the minds of Christians be worked up to take an absorbing interest in such a subject as spiritual gravitation? By its becoming associated with some event thrillingly sensational, and so published, in connection with it, in all the newspapers. The martyrdom of a prophet —and you are a prophet—while prophesying on Clerkenwell Green would supply such a sensational novelty. A *furor* of curiosity would be excited in the public mind to know the subject of your prophesying. Prophesy, then, on Clerkenwell Green, and be martyred there. Cast to the winds all pretence about spiritual gravitation being a scientific discovery, and boldly announce it as a revelation. Martyred in proclaiming it to an ignorant mob of roughs, there would be an official inquiry into the circumstances of your death. M. Dubois, as the friend who was last with you, would, of course, give evidence at this inquiry; and what you have recently said to him would be publicly stated and reported. The imagination of religious minds would then become excited in relation to spiritual gravitation, and thousands would inevitably believe in

it. Multitudes of religious doubters, weary of mental unrest, are ready to embrace a grand new religious idea that shall come to them in a semi-scientific form. Besides, a new revelation in relation to human destiny, when written in a man's own blood, appeals with a unique power to minds loving sincerity and earnestness. To such, a million unanswerable syllogisms are as nothing to one martyrdom. This acts on sympathising spirits as the soul-stirring sound of a war trumpet arousing sleeping soldiers to battle: morbid souls oppressed by spiritual nightmare dreams are awakened by it to a new moral life. And though they open their eyes to find themselves in intellectual darkness, yet awakened feeling brings them into conscious contact with reality: they lay hold on the Eternal Substance, and their terrible nightmare dreams are dissipated. For in the spiritual, as in the physical, world it is touch, not sight, that is the ultimate basis of reliable knowledge. To Clerkenwell Green, then! and seal the revelation that you are commissioned by Heaven to make to men with your heart's life-blood there! Electrify, by giving them a daring example, those timid Christians whose faces now become as masses of quivering *blancmange* when the scoffing physiologist gleefully shakes protoplasmic jelly before their eyes. Show them that to successfully assail the damning demon of Doubt, they must, in the fiery words

of Danton, 'Dare; and still dare; and dare without end.' Trample on the poisonous reptile spawn of astrology and the Black Art, the modern sciences. Science is playing the part of a Judas to the moral 'light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' Deliver, then, a daring assault upon Science for its fatal treachery to the moral nature of man. Hurl back, with withering scorn, to scientific materialism the notice that, in the reckless drunkenness of pride, it has served upon the Divinity to quit His world. Expose it to a deluded world as the lying agent of the Infernal Spirit. And as an inspired prophet, overpoweringly conscious of the ravishing presence of the 'hidden God' within his soul, as a 'God-intoxicated man,' exultingly proclaim to the men of this generation that they should undoubtingly give Nature herself the lie if she allies herself with Hell, and affirms that there is no Power above her: that man should joyously defy her blasting lightnings and her roaring, ravenous, storm-tossed waters, her reeling whirlwinds and her shattering earthquakes,—

> 'To quench his immortality,
> Or shake his trust in God!'

Rush on, then, joyously to a martyr's death. Prophesy, and let the white-hot feelings of your heart stream forth as burning lava from your lips, and inflame some of the devil-possessed human scum of London to

bloodthirsty fury. Suffer for a little while their brutal violence in patience, until your own feeble, flickering light of life shall be extinguished, and then your glorious example, turning many to righteousness, shall cause your name, in the memory of regenerate humanity, to shine as a star for ever and ever."

But before rushing on to death he felt that he should like to confess, and receive absolution. Inquiring of a passer-by, he learnt there was a Ritualistic church close by, and he hurried there immediately. He found the verger of this church standing at its door, and he told him that he wished to see a priest, that he might confess to him, as he believed that he was about to die. He had, he said, received a revelation, that he was about to proclaim on Clerkenwell Green, and for so doing he anticipated being martyred there. The verger hearing him talk thus, and noticing the crucifix hanging by the red ribbon outside his waistcoat, at once saw that he had to do with a poor fellow-creature who was out of his mind. He saw, too, that Arthur was in a dangerously explosive state from suppressed excitement, and he therefore assumed a gentle and interested expression in listening to him. He hoped, by humouring him, to get him to go quietly away from the church, without the congregation that was within being disturbed in any way. Neither of the priests there, he in a polite

way told Arthur, would, he feared, think it right to hear his confession while he was so much agitated. He appealed to Arthur himself to say whether he did not think they would decline to do so. To the verger's great satisfaction, Arthur replied that he thought they would decline; that it was but a few hours since that he had received his extraordinary supernatural revelation, and that it was but natural, therefore, that he should still be in a state of great mental disturbance and excitement. As it was not practicable for him to confess just then, he would, he said, endeavour in his own mind to make a perfect act of contrition, in the hope that that might obtain for him the absolution of Heaven.

He then requested the verger to excuse him from stopping to explain the nature of the revelation he had received, as it would shortly be published in all the newspapers; and, until his spiritual commission had been sealed with his own blood, he did not feel himself entitled to call upon any one to recognise its divine authority. His first, his only, object in life was now to get martyred with all the expedition possible. He then excitedly descended the steps at the church door on to the pavement.

Two decrepit male paupers in the parish uniform happened just then to be coming towards the church. Arthur beckoned them to him, and giving each of

the opposite direction. The example thus being set, others followed it, and Arthur was bumped and hustled about in a brutal manner.

As soon as the pickpockets had secured his gold chain and watch, and his purse as well, they managed to get him to the edge of the group. One of them then tripped him up, and another gave him a violent push behind, causing him to fall upon his face to the ground. They then made off as quickly as possible, and the girls followed them. The boys, also, seeing Arthur lying motionless, became frightened and ran away.

Just as they had started off, a cab appeared upon the Green, poked out of one window of which was the head of M. Dubois, who was staring about him in an eager manner.

Absorbed in his political discussion with his French acquaintance in Long Acre, some time elapsed before he discovered that Arthur had left him. When he did so, he hoped that, tired of waiting, Arthur might, perhaps, have gone on by himself to Gray's Inn Road, to see Mme. Dubois. Going home immediately, he, of course, found his friend was not there, and, after a little hurried conversation with Mme. Dubois, he took a cab and came to Clerkenwell Green, where he had understood Arthur purposed holding forth on spiritual gravitation.

To his alarm, instead of finding him addressing an audience on that subject, he found him just being left to himself, held face downwards to the ground by the attraction of terrestrial gravitation.

Jumping out of the cab that he had had pulled up close to where his friend was lying, he turned him on his back, and found that the lower part of his face was covered with blood, and that he was in an insensible state.

Several passers-by soon stopped to see what was the matter, one of whom, at M. Dubois's request, went to knock at the door of the nearest house to ask for a glass of water, when a lady, in the dress of a religious sisterhood, came out of it with one. She was nursing a sick woman in a front room of the house, and, attracted to the window by the noise of Arthur's harangue, had seen the ill-usage that he had brought upon himself.

The water being dashed in Arthur's face, he soon regained consciousness. He then recognised the nursing Sister as the same that he had met opposite the Star and Garter, Richmond, and taken to be Rotha. Her present appearance he regarded as undoubtedly brought about by a special Providence, though with what precise object his mind was as yet in too great a state of confusion to decide, he having been much stunned by the fall. As he con-

tinued looking, now at the Sister, now at M. Dubois, and now at the people round him, seeking to collect his thoughts, the doctor who was medical attendant to the patient whom the Sister was nursing came round on his daily visit. He quickly pushed his way through the crowd that had gathered round Arthur, that he might see if he could render any assistance. The Sister told M. Dubois who the doctor was, who immediately requested him to examine his friend, to see what injuries he had sustained.

For this to be done, the Sister proposed that Arthur should be taken into the house from which she had just come, as the crowd of curious lookers-on was increasing and pressing inconveniently around. This kind proposition was gladly accepted by M. Dubois.

His friend supporting him on one side and the doctor on the other, Arthur was able to walk into the house. At the direction of the Sister, he was conducted into the front room on the ground-floor, very poorly furnished as a sitting-room, and placed in an arm-chair there.

Upon examining him, the surgeon could not discover that Arthur had sustained any more serious injuries than a few bruises. As for the blood on the lower part of his face, that merely resulted from his nose bleeding.

Arthur's physical condition thus satisfactorily decided about, M. Dubois took the doctor aside to speak to him of his friend's mental state.

"Do you know what you have done?" then said Arthur to the nursing Sister, who remained by his side, and whom he still believed to be Rotha.

"No. What is it?" she asked, smiling, perceiving that she had to do with a lunatic.

"You have captured the Devil."

"Captured the Devil?"

"Yes. I am the Devil."

"Don't you believe him, madame; he's trying to make himself interesting by assuming to be a far worse character than he actually is," cried M. Dubois, in a bantering tone, from the other side of the room, where he was engaged with the doctor. He good-naturedly hoped that he might perhaps by so doing help to check some new delusion of Arthur's.

"Monsieur Dubois," exclaimed Arthur, rising from the arm-chair and advancing excitedly up to his friend, "there must be no question as to whether I am or am not the Devil. I surely must know that better than you can; and I affirm, in the most solemn manner possible, that the Infernal Spirit has incarnated himself within me. I warn you that the consequences of persisting in irritating me, by mockingly questioning the reality of my existence, may be

frightful and irreparable. It will then become necessary for me to take steps to demonstrate to you that there is no doubt at all about what I affirm, but that it is a shocking fact. For I can soon prove it to you, in many ways, if you insist upon having a proof. How would you like me to do so? Shall I cause the flames of hell to burst forth and consume this house—any number of houses—the whole of Clerkenwell? Or shall I smite you to my feet without a word, simply by an act of will, and cause you to roll over and over on the floor, and your body at each turn to be seized by some different disease—cholera, typhus, smallpox, gout, tic-douloureux, lockjaw, cancer—as many diseases as you like in rapid succession? Would that convince you? For you must be convinced—every one must be fully made aware that my body is now, as it were, a most fearful infernal machine, that needs only a certain amount of vibration to explode it, and that, if it is exploded, will shatter this planet into millions of atoms. Let men be thoroughly assured of this, and they will take care to avoid causing that fatal vibration of the fibres of my frame, and the world may yet be saved."

The Sister looked remonstratingly at M. Dubois, and he at once saw that it was necessary to humour his friend in his delusion, and recognise him as his Satanic Majesty.

"My dear friend," he said, seeking to calm Arthur's indignation, "I was merely joking. Speaking seriously, I do not at all question the truth of your statement that an infernal incarnation has taken place in you."

"You, without any reservation, recognise me as Beelzebub, the prince of the devils?"

"Decidedly I do."

"And," said the Sister, speaking in a very decided tone, "I wish Beelzebub to know that I am not afraid of him. I know how to subjugate him, so that it is wisest for him to obey me quietly."

"I know: it was you who, by concentrated prayer, vanquished Satan when he desperately struggled to possess me on Wimbledon Common, the night of the same day that I met you at Richmond."

"Yes; certainly it was."

"Put my obedience now to the test. Order me to do something: you will see that I now recognise your power."

"Sit down, then, in the arm-chair, where you were, and keep quite quiet."

Arthur immediately did as the Sister told him, and she, seeing him quiet, crossed to the other side of the room to speak to the doctor.

As Arthur remained sitting quietly, in obedience to the Sister's directions, he felt the almost uncontrollable

rage to blast and to destroy that had been gaining ascendency in his mind subside. His own identity seemed to him no longer merged in that of the Evil One. He felt no longer that *he* was the Devil, though he felt that he had the Devil within him. The Infernal Spirit, in a state of quiescence, seemed now to have located himself at the pit of his stomach, where he felt an extraordinary sensation—a sensation that was not a pain, but that was more distressing than a pain. His brain thus seeming temporarily free from diabolic possession, he endeavoured calmly to reflect upon his position. Providence, he thought, having tested him and found his faith sufficient, had now subjected him to a more terrible trial than that of physical death. He had to 'dare without end' for the good of humanity, even to the extent of risking his own personal salvation. The Prince of Darkness finding his supremacy in the world threatened by the preaching of spiritual gravitition, had taken up his abode within him, desiring to look into the matter, and to understand its exact nature and mode of operation. He maliciously hoped that, after obtaining such knowledge, he might be able to invent some means that should frustrate the beneficent results that the revelation of spiritual gravitation was likely to have on the destiny of humanity. But that the great enemy of man had thus been permitted to enter

into him, and take up his abode there, Arthur now saw was part of the deep strategy of Heaven. The Devil had been lured into him as into a trap. From the mysterious union between the souls of the saints in other worlds and his own; from the affinity, constituting a sort of spiritual marriage, between his own spirit and that of the nursing Sister, that gave her unique powers over the control of his moral destiny, the absolute possession of his (Arthur's) will, though naturally a weak one, became of tremendous difficulty. For it was thus aided in its warfare against Hell by other wills, whose power to resist evil arose from their acting in harmony with the Supreme Will. The task, then, now devolving upon him was to strive desperately to keep the Devil from mounting to his brain —to hold him firmly down, in a state of quiescent ignorance as to spiritual gravitation, at the pit of his stomach, at least until his strength failed. The triumphing career of the armies of Hell would be, comparatively, easily checked as long as he could do this; the subordinate devils would be at a complete loss as to what to do without the guidance of their great despotic chief; anarchy would reign in their ranks, the anarchy of blind hate, uncontrolled by a cruel and indomitable Will. Meanwhile, the celestial seeds that had been already sown by him, that, if left undisturbed for a short time, would germinate and put forth tender

shoots, and ultimately grow up and bear abundant fruit, would be duly unfolding their hidden life. He must nerve himself up, then, to a deadly struggle with the old Dragon, that opportunity might be given to a dying world to renew its youth, even though the appalling result of that struggle in regard to himself threatened to be the eternal death of his own soul. He must be willing, if need should arise, to be dragged down to hell by Satan, to become the victim of infernal gravitation, in order that, through the undisturbed working of heavenly gravitation, the speedy realisation of the millennium might become possible on earth.

The doctor, after a little discussion of the matter with M. Dubois in an undertone, so that Arthur might not hear, gave it as his opinion that Arthur was quite in an unfit state to be left to do as he liked, and that he required to have some one constantly with him, to put restraint upon him, if necessary. M. Dubois had kept the cab that he had come in waiting, and he decided that the best thing to do would be to take Arthur home in it at once. He feared to take him in a railway carriage, lest he might become violent, and annoy other passengers. As Arthur appeared to him to have some mysterious fancy about being bound to obey the nursing Sister, M. Dubois asked her, in a whisper, to endeavour to persuade his unfortunate

friend to go home quietly. This she, answering in a whisper, very kindly undertook to do. The doctor, however, thought that, in spite of her so doing, it might perhaps be found necessary on the way home to resort to restraint, and he therefore advised that M. Dubois should, if possible, take somebody with him, ready to help him in case of need. On hearing this, the Sister mentioned that there was a lodger, named Smith, in the top back room of the house where they were, who had once been an attendant upon an invalid gentleman, and who, being in very straitened circumstances, would, she had no doubt, be glad to accompany M. Dubois, for reasonable remuneration. She believed he was then at home, as only a very short time since she had met him going upstairs. She suggested that, if he was engaged, he might sit on the box beside the cabman, and only be had inside if it should be found necessary. Should M. Dubois's friend want to know who the man was, he might be told that he was an acquaintance of the cabman, who took that opportunity of having a ride to Richmond for nothing. Of course, all this was said in so low a tone that Arthur could not hear it.

M. Dubois was very much obliged to the Sister for her suggestion, and went out of the room directly, to see the lodger named Smith, on the top floor.

The Sister then went up to Arthur, to talk to him.

She told him that what he had gone through that morning had given a great shock to his system; that he must regard himself as a wounded soldier, who had to undergo treatment at the surgeon's hands, to fit him for fresh duties in the field. She requested him, therefore, to go home quietly with his friend, and patiently bear all that was necessary for the recovery of his health.

To her great satisfaction, Arthur promised to do just as she advised: in fact, he told her that wishes from her lips came to him as commands from Heaven; that though, in a worldly sense, even as a friend, she, as a punishment he recognised as just and salutary, had quite discarded him, he yet discerned plainly that her *soul* was the bride of his own soul, and as such had a divine right to regulate his conduct, such as no other soul on earth had.

M. Dubois, having succeeded in making satisfactory arrangements with the man upstairs about accompanying him, and also with the cabman about taking both of them and Arthur to Richmond, returned to the sitting-room. The doctor, being paid his fee, then went upstairs to visit the invalid he was attending there, and the Sister went with him, and Arthur very quietly accompanied his friend into the cab. They were followed out of the house by a short, stout man, of bilious complexion and sullen expression, who,

having shut the street door, took his seat on the box, beside the cabman. He was not, however, noticed by Arthur, who, on getting into the cab, being much exhausted, and also believing that it was the will of Heaven that he should take rest, in order to fit him for work to come, had leaned back and closed his eyes. The Sister, looking out from the window of the invalid's bedroom, saw the cab, going at the usual jog-trot pace of such vehicles, disappear from Clerkenwell Green without the imaginary prophet within it having, at least on the side of the cab that she could perceive, made any attempts to put his head out of the window to prophesy to the passers-by.

CHAPTER XXX.

A FIERCE STRUGGLE AND A FANCIED DISCOVERY.

On the afternoon of the Sunday on which Arthur made his appearance in the streets of London as a prophet, Mrs. De Vere and her daughter were sitting in their drawing-room, when they heard a cab draw up just outside their house. The drawing-room was on the ground floor, and looked on to the road, but the blind was down, to shut out the bright April afternoon sun. Jumping up, and running to one side of the window, Jemima pulled aside a little bit of the blind, peeped out, and then exclaimed,—

"Great heavens, mother! here's a cab stopped here, and there's father on the box beside the driver."

"Don't try and frighten me by talking nonsense, Jemima. You mean there's somebody very like your father there."

"No; it *is* he, himself; and I can see Mr. Howard, with another gentleman, inside the cab."

Mrs. De Vere rose from the easy-chair in which she was lounging, and going up behind her daughter,

peered over her shoulder out of the window. She was greatly troubled to find that what Jemima had told her was literally true. The worthless man with whom she had once lived as his wife, but who was not her husband, and whom she had hoped was long since dead, had indeed returned, to blight all her hopes. Withdrawing from the window, looking deadly pale, she said,—

"Jemima, I must leave you to receive Mr. Howard and those who have brought him home. I am too much upset to do so. I must go up into my own room for a bit to recover myself. You can say that I am very unwell, if I am asked for." She immediately left the room and went upstairs.

Continuing to peep out of window, Jemima saw the cabman give the reins into the hands of her father, and leave him sitting on the box, while he himself got down to let out the two gentlemen inside the cab. She began to hope that her father might not be coming into the house, but was merely having a ride, as a friend of the cabman. Of course, she could not know that M. Dubois, when he engaged him, had arranged with her father to do as he was doing. M. Dubois feared that it would irritate and distress Arthur if he discovered that he was regarded as so much out of his mind as to require a keeper. He had therefore arranged that Mr. Smith was to remain on the cab

box until Arthur had been admitted into the house. Mr. Smith was to be let in afterwards, and kept out of the sight of Arthur, unless the latter should exhibit symptoms that made restraint necessary. The following day M. Dubois purposed bringing some eminent physician, devoted to the treatment of lunacy, to see Arthur, and to get him to send an experienced attendant. Until such an attendant was obtained, Mr. Smith had agreed to stay at No. 1, Queen's Villas.

Arthur and his friend being shown by the servant into the drawing-room, Jemima made an effort to receive them in as undisturbed a manner as possible.

M. Dubois explained to Miss De Vere that Arthur had been rather over-exerting himself that morning, preaching in the open air in London; that a mob on Clerkenwell Green had handled him roughly, thrown him down, and stunned him; that a doctor had seen him, and said that his was a case requiring great care, and that he must be kept very quiet. M. Dubois then left the room to settle with the driver of the cab, who resumed his seat on the box. Mr. Smith, being then beckoned to by M. Dubois, got down from the cab and entered the house. A minute or two after, the professor returned to the drawing-room.

As he entered, Arthur was saying, "The first thing to do, if you please, Miss De Vere, will be to direct

the servant to let us have something to eat as quickly as possible; for we have been very hard at work, and when I tell you what it is that we have been doing, I am sure you will at once feel that we must be extremely hungry. We have been storming Hell and capturing the Devil. I have the Devil now within me. But don't be alarmed; there's no danger, if I'm not provoked. If I'm irritated, that gives the Evil Spirit an advantage over me. He fans mere sparks of bad feeling into flames; but so long as angry feelings are not excited in me I have the advantage over him. Will you kindly tell your mamma, and also the servant, to be most careful not to irritate me in the slightest degree, otherwise the consequences might be terrible.'"

"Certainly; I'll be sure and tell them," answered Jemima, perceiving that Arthur was now quite deranged. "And I'll go and see that dinner is got ready for you and your friend directly. Mamma and I waited for you until half-past two" (at Mrs. De Vere's, as in many other houses where there is a late dinner on week days, there was an early dinner on Sunday), "and then thought that perhaps you intended dining in town. But we have had the dinner kept warm, in case you did come home, and want it." So saying she left the room, to give instructions to Sarah Ann.

"Excuse me for one moment," said M. Dubois to Arthur, and then followed Miss De Vere out of the

room and closed the door. He took the opportunity of hurriedly making her acquainted, as they stood in the passage, some distance from the drawing-room door, with the arrangements he had made in consequence of his friend's illness. The man who had come with them outside the cab, he said, Mr. Howard believed to be an acquaintance of the driver, and did not know that he was at present downstairs, he having been admitted into the house at the same time that the cabman was paid, after Mr. Howard had entered the drawing-room. This person had been engaged in case it might be found necessary to put Mr. Howard under restraint; but unless that necessity should arise, it would be better that Mr. Howard should not know anything about the man being in the house. An eminent lunacy doctor would be brought by him to-morrow, to advise what was best to be done in the case. Without remaining long enough to see the disturbing effect his words had on Miss De Vere, M. Dubois hastened back to his friend in the drawing-room.

Her wretched life in the past, when her brutal, vile-tempered father was at home, was vividly recalled to the mind of Jemima. She felt an invincible repugnance to see him until it became absolutely necessary to do so. Instead of going downstairs, she went into the dining-room and rang the bell. On its

being answered, she gave her instructions to the servant there. Laying the cloth herself, and helping the servant to arrange the things on the table, she was enabled in a few minutes to return to the drawing-room, and announce to the two gentlemen there that their dinner was ready.

Going after them into the dining-room, she remained with them a little while, to see whether they had all they required. Finding that they had, she was about to retire and go upstairs to her mother, when M. Dubois said to her,—

"Would you oblige me, directly after dinner, with some note-paper, and all that is requisite for writing a letter? You are probably aware that one of Mr. Howard's most particular friends is a Mr. Andrews, who now lives at Reading. I wish to write to him before I leave here, and post the letter as I go home, so that he may get it the first thing to-morrow morning." Turning to Arthur, he said, "You would like to see Andrews, would you not?"

"Certainly, I should. I suppose, though speaking in public is at present forbidden to me, I may privately teach spiritual gravitation to my friends?"

"I see no objection, if you take care to avoid getting excited in doing so."

"Then, to avoid that, all who are admitted to see me had better be told beforehand that whatever I may

say about spiritual gravitation is not to be argued about, but accepted as inspired revelation."

"Just so. I will tell Andrews in my letter that he must not question whatever you may affirm. And Miss De Vere will, no doubt, see that no one else is permitted to see Mr. Howard without first being similarly cautioned?"

"I will take care that that shall be so," replied Jemima. "And now I'll go and put all that you require for writing your letter on the davenport in the drawing-room. But I'm afraid that we haven't any postage stamps."

"Never mind about that: I have one or two in my purse," said Arthur.

Miss De Vere then left the room, and went into the drawing-room to do as she had promised, her heart a prey to both the conflicting passions of hope and fear. The prospect of Mr. Andrews coming there to visit his afflicted friend held out the hope that, through being brought into her society, as he naturally would be, he might once again become her lover. And should that happen, as he was now a partner with Mr. Peter Brown, his pecuniary position, she presumed, would not put any obstacle in the way of their speedily getting married. On the other hand, as if for the very purpose of mocking her hopes of this marriage, that she now so much desired being brought about,

that horrid father of hers, that she had thought dead, had most provokingly turned up, apparently with no intention of dying yet awhile. Would Andrews, if he discovered that she was illegitimate, and that her father was alive and a great blackguard, even though he might still be in love with her, yet be willing to marry her? She greatly feared that he would not. His objection to marry while he had only a hundred a year showed that he was not a man prepared to act at all rashly in regard to marrying—not at all prepared to disregard what worldly prudence might have to say in the matter. In a very troubled state of mind, after having put all the writing materials on the davenport ready for M. Dubois to write his letter, Jemima ran upstairs to her mother, to tell her of all that had just occurred below.

Dinner over, M. Dubois and Arthur returned into the drawing-room. The professor persuaded his friend to rest on the sofa, and dozed himself for a while in an easy-chair. Presently he set about writing his letter to Andrews, and he had just finished it when Miss De Vere returned into the drawing-room and rang for tea. Her mother remained upstairs, and her daughter had to make apologies to the gentlemen for her not making her appearance in the drawing-room. Tea was quickly served, and as the party sat drinking it, Jemima entered into an animated conversation with

M. Dubois about his family, and other subjects. Though she had never seen M. Dubois before, she had often heard Arthur speak of him, and she knew that he was married to a sister of Mr. Andrews. That caused her to take some interest in him and his family. But Arthur took no part in their conversation. Reclining on the sofa, he sipped his tea in silence, reflecting with complacency upon what he regarded as the great work that he had accomplished that morning; that, officiating as the inspired agent of Heaven, he had inaugurated the dawn of a new era for humanity; that he had made for it the speedy establishment of the millennium a sublime possibility.

M. Dubois was very pleased to see him thus quiet; and having made him promise to go to bed early, and requested him not to go out till he came to see him the next day, he, about half-an-hour or so after tea, took leave of him. Jemima followed the professor into the entrance hall, to see him out; but before leaving the house he went downstairs, to give instructions to the man there, who was to keep watch over Arthur. Jemima waited in the hall until M. Dubois came up again. When he did so he asked her to take the key out of Mr. Howard's bedroom door, so that he should not be able to lock himself in. He also told her that he had arranged with the man downstairs to listen to Mr. Howard's movements, and

not to let him go out of doors until he (M. Dubois) came to-morrow. After Mr. Howard had retired to his own room for the night, he proposed that Miss De Vere should let the man have an easy-chair and a blanket on the landing outside the door, as he would have to pass the night there. Miss De Vere having readily agreed to all these arrangements, the professor hurried off to the railway station; Jemima went upstairs again to her mother.

As soon as the refreshing effects of the two cups of strong tea that he had drunk had had time to fully display themselves upon Arthur's brain and nerves, his "rage for thinking" set in again, and he soon felt an imperious craving to give some external expression to the restless workings of his mind. Though haranguing crowds in the streets was forbidden him, he thought, yet writing letters was not—he might so relieve his mind without danger of exposing it to injurious excitation. And the first letter that he would write, as a prophet, he decided should be to the Rev. Alfred Tudor, fully explaining to him the extraordinary supernatural revelation that he had had that day, and requesting him to make it known to such others of the clergy as he might think fit. His friend M. Dubois, to whom it had already been made known, he reflected, was a disciple of the Revolution, and had many friends and acquaintances who gloried in

being Revolutionists and the enemies of the Church. Spiritual gravitation, it might then be presumed, from their extensive intercourse with one another throughout the world, would soon become well understood amongst Revolutionists, and the men of perfect purity of intention amongst them would then be able to establish conscious communication through its operation with higher mental beings in a similar moral state throughout creation. For the struggle on earth between the Revolutionists and their great antagonist, the Christian Church, then, to be an equal one, that is, a reasonably fair one, the clergy also should be acquainted with spiritual gravitation. They would, of course, avail themselves of its aid as being an extraordinary revelation from Heaven; the Revolutionists would make use of it as a new and grand scientific discovery. The leading spirits of the Church and the Revolution, though outwardly at war with one another, would thus fundamentally be really at work bringing about the same end—the bringing the at present distracted souls of men into harmonious union with souls in other parts of space whose volitions are primarily regulated by the attraction of the ultimate spiritual Centre of Unity of the universe.

In accordance with his resolution, he set about writing his letter to the Rev. Alfred Tudor, and spent so much time in doing so that it became dusk before

he had finished, and he had to ring for candles, to complete the letter. When it was ready, he left the room intending to put it in the post himself, considering it too important a letter to trust in the hands of Sarah Ann, lest, becoming absorbed in loving conversation with the young man with whom she walked out on Sunday evening, she should altogether forget that she had a letter to post.

But just as Arthur had his hand on the latch of the street door, the man who had been left to watch over him by M. Dubois came up to him, and told him that he had better not go out, that he was not well enough to do so. Arthur, upon being thus interfered with by some strange man coming up to him from the lower regions, was highly astonished and indignant. He demanded of the man who he was, and by whose authority he took upon himself to meddle in his affairs. The man told him that he was engaged by M. Dubois to watch over him in consequence of the state of his health, and that his instructions were not to let him go out until that gentleman came to-morrow.

"He had no right to make such an arrangement, and, therefore, I must insist upon your permitting me to go out. I only want to post a letter."

"The servant is just going out,—she will post it for you."

"That will not do; it is a most important letter, and I particularly wish to post it myself."

Arthur then made an effort to open the door, but Smith forced his hand away from the latch. A struggle between the two men followed. Arthur became furious; the Devil within him, he felt, was overmastering his better nature. Smith, who was a man of violent temper, got into a great passion, and, being much the stronger of the two, succeeded in getting Arthur down on his back on the mat at the entrance door, and holding him there.

"It will be of no use trying any of these sort of games with me, I can tell you," he said, savagely.

Arthur replied by giving him a volley of the most frightfully insulting epithets.

"That's nice language for a gentleman who calls himself religious, and goes out preaching," exclaimed Smith; and, enraged, he put his knee on Arthur's chest, and clutched him round the throat in so brutal a manner as almost to choke him. Feeling himself utterly vanquished, Arthur ceased to struggle. Seeing this, Smith let go of him, and standing up gave him a kick, exclaiming surlily, "Get up, you have got to go to bed now."

Arthur stood up, and Smith laid hold of his arm and took him into the dining-room. He went there for a candle, to light them upstairs to bed with. The

lamp in the hall had not yet been lit, and it had been too dark there for Arthur to see Smith's face at all distinctly; but as soon as he did so in the dining-room, its extraordinary likeness to the miniature portrait of his father in his mother's gold locket (he had never himself seen his father, having been born after his mother's desertion) immediately struck him. As he stood with his eyes fixed on Smith, the latter said,—

"What are you staring at me in that wild way for?"

"Because, now that I am able to see you, it seems to me that you must be my father."

"Certainly, I'm your father; that's why I am put here to watch over you," rejoined Smith. He thought that if the lunatic took him for his father he might be more easy to manage. To secure that result Smith was willing to become the imaginary prophet's father, brother, uncle, cousin, or any other relation that he liked. He returned the hearty shake of the hand given him by Arthur as if he fully recognised him to be his son.

"Tell me," continued Arthur, "do you know a Sister of a religious order, who is nursing an invalid at a house on Clerkenwell Green? Had that nursing Sister anything to do with your coming here?"

"You mean Sister Scholastica, who brought the

glass of water to you as you were lying on the Green? Yes, it is through her that I am here."

That his father should be known to Rotha, and that she should have been directly instrumental in bringing him and his father together, deeply impressed Arthur.

"Our coming together under the circumstances we do, is most remarkable," he said to Smith. "I see plainly that it has been brought about by the mysterious hand of Providence. Though you treated my mother most cruelly, yet she forgave you; and, out of regard to her wishes, I forgive you too. Let us endeavour to forget the past, and be friends for the future." He again took Smith's right hand and shook it heartily. "I think," he continued, "to avoid all chance of our quarrelling, it had better be an understood thing between us that the past, in relation to my mother, is not to be mentioned."

"Just as you like," replied Smith, in an indifferent way, not taking the trouble to play his part well.

Arthur, though not much surprised, was pained at what he considered the want of heart displayed by him whom he took for his father.

"I had not the least idea," he said, apologetically, but in a colder tone than before, "who you were when we were in the hall, or I should not have fought with you."

"Nor, I hope, have used such dreadful language," said Smith. "There are ladies in the house, you know."

"It was not I who swore, but the Devil, who is within me. While my rage lasted, my tongue was not my own, but the Devil's."

"Well, if the Devil tries to wag your tongue like that in the night, I shall stuff a towel in your mouth, so I warn *him*."

"Yes, that's what you had better do. My will sometimes is not strong enough to control him. You must assist me in doing battle with him. He's quiet now; but I can feel him crouching just here." Arthur pointed to the pit of his stomach.

"Then come up to bed, and try and get some sleep; you have had a hard day's work. After a good night's rest you will be in better condition to fight the Devil than at present." So saying, Smith took up one candle and blew out the other; then, taking the deranged man by the arm, he led him out of the room.

In the entrance hall Arthur noticed the letter that he had been going to post lying on the floor, near the street door: he had dropped it when he began to struggle with Smith. The latter, thinking only of his patient, had not troubled himself about what had become of the letter, and did not appear to see it now. Arthur said nothing about it, but went upstairs

quite quietly, leaving the letter lying where it was. That letter, addressed to the Rev. Alfred Tudor, he now surmised it was the design of Providence should not be posted at present, but for inscrutable purposes should lie where it was.

Reflecting, as he undressed himself, he came to the conclusion that it was the will of Heaven that he should be treated as a madman; that it was necessary for him to go through various experiences as a lunatic in connection with the fulfilment of his mission; and that his father, whom he had never before seen, should make his first appearance to him as his keeper, he believed, decidedly, to be for some mysterious purpose yet to be revealed.

When he was in bed he felt no inclination to sleep, but, as Smith told him he must try and do so, he closed his eyes. His mind, however, continued to be busily occupied with reflections upon the turn events had taken with him. He no longer felt so exultant as he had done a short time before. He had cruel suspicions that he had a great deal to do yet before the establishment of the millennium would become possible on earth. A feeling almost of terror at the magnitude of his mission possessed him.

And, as he continued reflecting, the sense of the appalling magnitude of his mission became more and more intense, until it became an agony. He

clasped to his heart his crucifix, that he had gone to bed with suspended by the crimson silk ribbon round his neck; then, kissing it, sought relief from the anguish of his soul in passionate though silent prayer. After so doing for some little time, the desire to look upon his crucifix—to seek to steady the reelings and tossings of his soul by gazing fixedly at the face of the image of his crucified Saviour—became irresistible. He fancied that from the way he heard him breathing that his attendant was sleeping, and on opening his eyes he found that such was the case. Smith, imagining his patient to be sleeping, had permitted himself to go to sleep in an easy-chair by the door. A candle was burning in the room, and Arthur, holding up his crucifix so that the light fell upon the front of it, fixed his eyes with steady intensity upon the face of the image of Christ. Surely, he thought, as he did so, he must be the victim of some fearful delusion,—the face on his crucifix appeared to be, not the face of Christ, but the face of the Devil! He made a concentrated effort of will, determining that he would not be deceived by an evil imagination—that he would *not* see an image existing only in his own mind, but the *actual* image before him. And, looking fixedly at it, with stern imaginary self-possession, he became cruelly forced to acknowledge that the face of that external image of Christ was actually transformed

into a likeness of the Devil. The colour of the remaining portions of the image was as usual, but the face was now of a horrible *bluish*-black colour. The crown of thorns was replaced by horns; the expression of godlike sorrow for one of infernal *glee;* the fire of hell glared out at him from the eyes; and a terribly stern monition within him, that he recognised as divine, now warned him that if he flinched for one instant from the glare of those fearful, mocking eyes, his own soul would be lost; the souls of countless multitudes of his fellow-creatures would be lost—all, all would be lost!

At this he felt stimulated to the display of a superhuman invincibility of will. As, however, he continued to stare steadily at the terrible face, strange phenomena in connection with hypnotism, with which he was familiar, were recalled to his mind. Nervous, susceptible people, such as he was, he remembered, by steadily gazing on one small object are liable to be thrown into a state of mesmeric sleep; would not that be the case with him if he had to look steadily at this small devil's face for long? Soon it seemed to him that his sight *was* becoming less distinct; that the outlines of the infernal features were becoming somewhat blurred; that a sort of sleep was beginning to steal over him. And when he had fallen into mesmeric trance through infernal influence,

would not his *will* be utterly subjugated to the will of Satan, and would not he be forced then to reveal to him all the mysteries of the working of celestial spiritual gravitation? Such, indeed, threatened to be the deplorable ending of the matter. But, no doubt, that would be a less evil than the shocking consequences that would follow his own disobedience to the peremptory command that came to him from Heaven. His duty, then, was clear, though terrible: it was to render a blind obedience to, not to question in a mutinous spirit the wisdom of, the strategy of, Providence. He was ordered, from spiritual head-quarters, not to flinch for one instant from steadily facing and defying the Devil, and flinch he would not.

"I will dare, and still dare, and dare without end," he said, in a defiant whisper, immovably keeping his big eyes fixed upon the, to him, fiercely glaring eyes of the image. And so, fixedly staring at his presumed appalling enemy, he lay struggling desperately against overwhelming horror, dreading every moment that he might fall into mesmeric sleep, and his will be subjugated by that of the Devil.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CARRIED BEHIND THE SCENES.

A TRAPEZIST on a bending rope, at a perilous height, striving to perform some difficult feat, is an object inspiring lookers-on, if they be ordinary mortals, with pleasurable excitement. Let this trapezist lose his balance, appear as if falling, and then, by extraordinary dexterity, save himself, the interest in him is redoubled. But let him at length really make a fatal slip—let pitiless gravitation succeed in pulling him with crushing force to the floor, then the smashed lump of humanity lying there, being no longer amusing, is quickly carried away behind the scenes.

The fate of such an unfortunate gymnast would well illustrate that of Arthur Howard at the point that has now been reached in this narrative. The desperate struggling of his mind to keep its footing on the yielding, lofty rope of reason, had at length utterly failed. Mental force in him had altogether lost its equilibrium and fallen a victim to brute force.

His mind was shattered; the unity of his self-consciousness was riven in two; he spoke of himself as "we," as if he were a king; he was no longer himself only, he was also beside himself. Some of the more shocking symptoms of insanity, too, fully developed themselves in him. From his lips, that, previous to this illness, oaths had but very rarely fallen, issued floods of blasphemous oaths, more superlatively abominable than the swearing of a drunken cabman. And he who, when in his right mind, shuddered at the mere thought of those men who delight in following in the footsteps of Cain, now exhibited a blood-thirsty ferocity worthy of a wolf or of a tiger. In a condition that is one of "intolerable anguish," he figuratively, with a towel stuffed in his mouth to stifle his cursings, his blasphemies, and his shrieks, is removed behind the scenes, to make his reappearance only when the doctors shall have succeeded in putting him into working order as a moral trapezist.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ON THE FORT AT MARGATE.

ARTHUR'S sanity, though doomed to rock terribly on the brink of a precipice, was not fated to topple over into a bottomless abyss. The derangement of the brain with which he was afflicted was only functional, and the malady, comparatively soon, yielded to skilful treatment.

As soon as he was sufficiently convalescent he went to Margate, for the completion of his recovery. This watering-place was chosen for him to go to by his friends, not merely on account of its intensely bracing air and great accessibility to London, but also because of the very numerous Cockney amusements to be found there. In these it was hoped Arthur might, perhaps, be persuaded (in the enfeebled state his brain was) to take some interest, and thus his mind be diverted from its dangerous tendency to brood over grave and painful subjects.

The reader will, no doubt, remember that on the

Sunday that Arthur announced himself, in the house on Clerkenwell Green, as Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, a man named Smith was engaged by M. Dubois as his Infernal Highness's attendant, *temporarily*. Arthur, however, believing this man to be his father, and that he had been appointed to be his attendant by a special Providence, had got on so wonderfully well with him, that Smith was engaged to remain as keeper to the unfortunate lunatic. A second and skilled attendant had been engaged while Arthur's delirium was at its worst and he was inclined to be violent, but it was not found necessary to retain him longer than a fortnight. When Arthur went to Margate, Smith was still engaged as his attendant, and accompanied him there.

During the earlier part of Arthur's visit at Margate, the nursing Sister, whom he imagined to be Rotha, was there with an invalid. This invalid—an old la of weak intellect—often, in fine weather, sat with her nurse on one or other of the seats facing the sea on the elevated promenade known as the Fort. Whenever Arthur saw them doing so, and there was room for him on the seat where they were, he sat down beside them, in order to have an opportunity of closely observing and, as much as possible, talking with the Sister. But the old lady gave him very little chance of doing the latter. She had not sense enough left to

let silence accompany the darkness of her intellect, but took a childish delight in making sounds to show its emptiness. She was irrepressibly garrulous, and capriciously took a great fancy to talking to Arthur whenever she saw him. The Sister thus had but little opportunity of speaking when Arthur was sitting beside her and the old lady, and, apparently, she had little inclination to do so. Never by the slightest word or look did she give any recognition that she had ever been on terms of intimate friendship with Arthur.

One day, the old lady having asked him if he had ever tried to benefit his health by residing permanently in the country, he told her of his sojourn at Daisy Cottage, Serfswell, near Reading. In doing so he took care to mention some particulars of his life there that he felt sure the Sister would remember, if she were indeed Rotha, and as he did so he watched her face. But he saw no evidence whatever that the mention of these particulars brought any recollections, painful or otherwise, to her mind.

"My memory," said the old lady, "is so bad, that I cannot be sure of it, but I think I remember that while I was once staying with a friend in the neighbourhood of Reading, we, one day, when taking a carriage drive, passed through the village of Serfswell. Has not the village church a very picturesque old Norman tower, overgrown with ivy?"

"Yes; and there are one or two very old yew-trees in the churchyard, that are always pointed out to visitors."

"Ah! now you mention *them*, I recollect distinctly that I *have* been there. I remember my friend stopping the carriage, and particularly pointing out to me the aged yew-trees of which you speak. It's a very pretty country about there. Probably you may also be acquainted with it, Sister Scholastica?" asked the old lady, turning her face towards her nurse. "You were telling me the other day that you were once in the neighbourhood of Reading for some time."

"I beg your pardon, madam, it was near Dorking that I mentioned I once stayed, and found the scenery so beautiful."

"Ah! Dorking—so it was. Then, perhaps, you have no acquaintance with that part of the country of which the gentleman and I were speaking?"

"None at all. I have never been there," replied Sister Scholastica.

Arthur eagerly watched her face as she was speaking. His expectant attitude attracted her attention, and as her clear, guileless eyes met his, he felt convinced that she was speaking the truth.

"But," said the old lady, after a slight pause in the conversation, "of all the beautiful views that I have seen in England, that from the Terrace, Richmond

Hill, I think the most beautiful. Is that a favourite view of yours, sir?"

"O yes," answered Arthur, abstractedly, hardly knowing what he was saying. Sister Scholastica had set him meditating.

"And what do you think is your favourite view, Sister Scholastica—in England I mean?" went on the chattering old lady. "Of course, you have seen the view from Richmond Hill? By the way, it was you, I think, told me that you were there not long ago, when you paid a visit to a relation of yours at Petersham?"

"I *was* there towards the end of last April, for the first and only time," replied the Sister. "The view is certainly a very beautiful one. I had not, however, time to stay and look at it. I merely passed along the Terrace in a great hurry, so that I should not like to say, until I have been there again, that I like it better than any other that I have seen in England."

"When we return to town," said the old lady to the Sister, "you and I will make a little excursion to Richmond. You might then take the opportunity of calling on your relation at Petersham. I once lived at Petersham myself, but not for long. I found the air there too relaxing for me. Does your relation find it agree with her?"

"You are quite mistaken, my dear madam, in

thinking that I have any relation at Petersham. Possibly I may have inadvertently led you to think so through not being sufficiently careful in expressing myself when telling you of my visit there. Before I came to be with you I—as I mentioned to you some little time ago—nursed for many weeks, until her death, a poor woman living at Clerkenwell, and it was her sister that I went to see at Petersham. She was a young wife, just confined with her first baby; and my poor patient, who was a wife and a mother herself, was greatly distressed that she could not go to her sister, and got me to visit her, instead, to see that she was being properly nursed and properly cared for, as well as to take her a few little things that she thought would be useful to her. On my return, as I had never been on Richmond Hill, I thought I might as well pass over it on my way to the railway station."

Arthur at that moment happened to sigh, causing the Sister to look at him. At the same time a majestic black dog, that had been walking about the Fort in a manner indicating it to be filled with a lofty sense of its responsibilities, whatever they might be, came up to the old lady, and, though a perfect stranger to her, paid his respects to her, and seemingly welcomed her at the Fort, with a perfect ease and grace of demeanour that even a born gentleman could not have rivalled. While the old lady was occupied in

making some complimentary remarks to this noble creature, it occurred to Arthur that a good opportunity offered itself for him to try and make the Sister clearly understand that he was not drunk, but ill, when she met him opposite the Star and Garter, as she was returning from Petersham. He imagined it to be possible that she might still believe that he was drunk then, and that it was drink that sent him mad, as she beheld him on Clerkenwell Green. It vexed him to think that she might be under a false impression so calculated to lower him in her eyes.

"I hope, Sister," he said, "you now clearly understand that whatever was strange or unbecoming in my behaviour towards you, when I met you as you were returning from Petersham, was not the result of what you, at the time, believed that it was?"

"Oh, quite so," replied Sister Scholastica. "I am now satisfied that when you annoyed me you were acting under the influence of delusions resulting from illness. I felt assured of that when I saw you on Clerkenwell Green. The mental illness that I then saw you suffering from, it was plain to me, must have been some considerable time coming on."

"But I fear that I frightened and upset you very much at Richmond; so excited you, perhaps, as to prevent you sleeping that night?" Arthur looked at the Sister in a way that made her think he was worrying himself very unnecessarily.

"Nothing of the kind. My poor patient, for a wonder, that night slept well; and I, through having been out in the country air, slept wonderfully well, too. But," continued the Sister, speaking in a manner as if she had been Arthur's nurse, "you must not let any unbecoming acts committed during your illness worry you now. That will do no good, but may seriously retard your perfect recovery. You must not brood uncomfortably over the past, but try and look cheerfully towards the future, and believe that soon you will be quite well."

"Yes, that's what you must try and do," said the old lady to Arthur, and then ran on, giving him a vast quantity of commonplace advice, enforced by accounts of her own experiences.

But Arthur, though he heard the sounds of the old lady's words, was deaf to their meaning: gazing out upon the sea, he was absorbed in thought.

The majestic black dog, finding the old lady's attention quite turned from himself to Arthur, left her, to place himself in front of the latter, and looked wistfully up into his eyes, wagging his tail at the same time in a most expressive manner. But he soon found there was no chance of getting Arthur to think of *him* then, and went up to the Sister, to be caressed by her. The poor old lady, finding that her well-meant but foolish babbling continued to be quite un-

heeded by him, at length wished Arthur good-morning, and went away with her nurse, the magnificent black dog gallantly escorting the ladies to the confines of the Fort.

Broodingly looking out upon the sea, Arthur remained sitting upon the bench where the ladies had left him. The conversation but just narrated had given the death-blow to any lingering remains of his recent insane delusions. For the last few weeks, up to that moment, his mind had been like the eyes of one who, awakened from a vivid dream, is not yet sufficiently awakened to avoid seeing something of his dream mingling with the realities upon which he looks; or, to make use of another figure, it had resembled the state of a balloonist who feels himself gently descending from the clouds. *Now* he was thoroughly awakened from his insane dreaming—*now* he had come suddenly down, with a bump, on *terra firma*. That Sister Scholastica recognised him, but intentionally cut him dead, when he met her opposite the Star and Garter, Richmond, was one of those delusions that had hitherto abided with him. But now he became satisfied that he had then appeared to her as an utter stranger, who had been drinking, and who was consequently misbehaving himself. Now he felt convinced that he had been utterly mistaken in identifying the Sister as Rotha. All his grand

ideas about her agonising in prayer for him, and rescuing him from the Evil One, that terrible night he passed on Wimbledon Common,—about her soul having a mysterious affinity for his soul, and being spiritually married to it, and so forth, were now effectually put to flight. And with these ideas the conception that had been associated with them, of his having been chosen by God for some great and peculiar work, a conception that had latterly been growing weaker and weaker, vanished completely. He became humbly conscious that he had been monstrously befooled by the exaggerations of an insane vanity.

Now, however, that, following the fearful excitement to which his brain had been subjected, there had succeeded a feeling of utter incapacity for any great mental effort, it came as a relief to him to find that that profound mental repose that he felt he needed it was his duty as well as his inclination to take, and that he was free from any onerous and exceptional responsibility in regard to the destiny of his fellow-creatures. But it was, on the other hand, a cause of painful disappointment to him that, instead of knowing that Rotha had recovered from a state of idiotcy, and become a nursing sister, he was quite in the dark as to whether she had recovered or not, and whether she was alive or dead.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PORTRAIT IN THE GOLD LOCKET.

A FEW minutes after the old lady and her nurse, Sister Scholastica, had left Arthur, Smith, who had been to the circulating library to change some books, came up to him.

"I couldn't get 'Miss Misanthrope'—it was out; so I've brought you 'The World Well Lost,'" he said, holding out the two volumes of the last-mentioned novel towards Arthur, who took them, and answered,—

"Thank you, *father*," strongly emphasising the word "father."

Smith looked at Arthur scrutinisingly. Was he not so well as he had been recently, and falling again under some of his old delusions?

"Whatever," he said, "has caused you to take up again with the delusion that I am your father? I thought that you had quite got over that."

"It's no delusion," replied Arthur, astonished. "I have no doubt but that you are my father, and I didn't know that you had any doubt. I have until recently been under a delusion that, for wise but

inscrutable purposes, Providence required that, for a time at least, we should live together as we have been doing,—I as a lunatic, and you simply as my attendant, our near relationship not being recognised even in intercourse between ourselves. I thought that, as you had come to me as my keeper, Providence desired you to be treated merely as my keeper until It gave further orders. Now, however, all my delusions, after having latterly been growing weaker and weaker, have at length been effectually extirpated through a conversation that I have just had with Sister Scholastica; and I see no reason why we should not openly recognise one another as father and son."

Smith stared at Arthur with an expression of inquiring surprise.

"You taking me for your father," he said, "the Sunday night at Richmond that I stopped you, under instructions from M. Dubois, from going out, I simply supposed to be the result of an insane fancy that you had to be humoured in, and I thought no more about it. And your name being Howard did not in any way impress me, though that happens to be my own real name, as I have met with lots of Howards in the course of my life who were no relations of mine."

"I think that I shall soon be able to convince you

that it was not an insane fancy caused me to take you for my father that Sunday evening that I first saw you. I then recognised you from a miniature portrait that I have of you, and when afterwards I found you went by the name of Smith, I supposed that for some prudential reasons you had changed your name. Come in doors, and I'll show you the portrait."

Arthur got up and, followed by Smith, entered the house (the entrance-door being only kept on the latch in the day-time) where they lodged, which was close by, and looked on to the Fort.

Having run and fetched his dressing-bag from his bedroom, Arthur, accompanied by Smith, entered their sitting-room. Unlocking the dressing-bag, Arthur took from a small morocco box in it the gold locket that he had received as a parting gift from the hand of his dying mother, and, opening the locket, showed Smith the portrait it contained.

"It was this," he said, "enabled me to identify you. It was given me by my mother on her death-bed."

Smith at once recognised the locket as a present from himself to his late wife. A young artist of talent, poor and unknown at the time, but who had since become eminent, with whom he when a bachelor got acquainted, through lodging at the same house, had painted for him the miniature portrait for very trifling remuneration. In it—it was admirably exe-

cuted—the individual peculiarity of expression of Smith's Jewish-looking face was unmistakably seen.

"But I was not at all aware that my wife had any child?" said Smith, in a perplexed manner.

"I was born many months after you left her. Possibly when you did so you did not know that she was likely to become a mother."

"I did not. If I had known that, I would not have left her, notwithstanding all her relations might have done to separate us," said Smith, hypocritically.

"My mother," said Arthur, "notwithstanding your treatment of her, retained her affection for you to the last, and while she lived cherished the hope of seeing you once again, to tell you that she forgave you. And though it unfortunately happened that she was prevented from telling me so in words, yet I am satisfied her dying wish was, that, if ever I should have the opportunity, I should seek only to avenge her wrongs as a wife by treating you with kindness."

Smith tried to look affected, but did not very well succeed. For a man in such a position as he was, thus to learn that he had a son of independent means who was disposed to treat him with kindness, he felt, vividly, as being a piece of great good luck.

"There appears to be no doubt," he said, "that I really am your father."

"No doubt at all," replied Arthur, "if your wife

was the daughter of Mr. Edward Toogood, tea dealer, of Southwark, who, dying soon after his daughter's marriage, left his estate to be administered under an old will, made when he was not nearly so well off as when he died. Under this old will of Mr. Toogood, only a portion of the money left to his daughter became settled upon herself; whereas her father's intention was that the whole should be so settled, under a new will that he contemplated making, but did not live to make. But his son-in-law gave to the old man on his death-bed (whose last illness came very suddenly) his *word of honour* that the whole of the money coming to his daughter should be settled on herself, and so had dissuaded him from making a new will, as quite unnecessary, and which, indeed, the poor sufferer was then quite in an unfit state to do. If you are my father, you will know how many thousand pounds became invested in trust for my mother under the old will referred to; and also how much came to you for you to settle upon my mother, according to your *word of honour* given to her father when dying. You will know, too, whether my mother's husband kept his word that was given under such solemn circumstances."

Smith winced, but it was not his habit to let any feeling of shame stand in the way of his obtaining material benefits.

"Five thousand pounds," he said, "became invested in trust for my wife's benefit under that old will of her father, and seven thousand pounds remained for me to settle upon her, according to my word of honour. Of this latter sum, I must admit that not a penny ever was settled upon her."

"There is no room for the shadow of a doubt that you are indeed my father," rejoined Arthur, in a bitter tone.

He took up the gold locket, that was lying on the centre table, and, closing it, replaced it in its little box, and put this in his dressing-bag. Having done so, he took out of the bag an envelope with some writing on it, and handed it to his father, saying,—

"This will also let you see that I *am* your son: the handwriting is Mrs. Howard's, your wife's,—is it not?"

Taking the envelope, Smith at once recognised the writing on it as that of his wife. That writing consisted of the following words: "Photographs of my dear son Arthur." Opening the envelope, Smith took out and examined three *cartes de visite* of Arthur. On the back of each, in writing that he also recognised as that of his wife, he read the date when it was taken, and the name of the place where it was taken. "That makes assurance doubly sure," he said, replacing the *cartes de visite* in the envelope, and returning it to

Arthur. "I should like now to give you a specimen of my handwriting," he continued, wishing to prevent the possibility of Arthur being subsequently attacked with any nervous doubts as to the reality of their relationship. For himself he had no longer any doubt of it. "You have, I presume, seen letters from her husband amongst your mother's papers? If I write something, before your eyes, you will then be able to see whether my handwriting is that of her husband."

"I have your cruel farewell letter to my mother, here in the dressing-bag," said Arthur. "I always keep it and the locket together."

Smith looked uncomfortable: he would have liked to have looked ashamed of himself, because he thought it would have *paid* to do so; but he could not manage it. "I will write something, and then you can compare it with the handwriting of that letter," he said to Arthur.

Going up to the side table, he opened the writing-case that was on it, and, placing a sheet of note-paper before him, pen in hand, inquired, "What would you like me to write?"

"Anything you choose," answered Arthur. "Any commonplace saying, or any few random words that may come into your head, signed with your usual signature."

Smith then wrote on the sheet of note-paper lying

before him, and immediately after handed it to Arthur, who read on it,—

"It is never too late to mend.

Arthur Howard, *alias* John Smith."

Arthur had taken out of the dressing-bag the letter to his mother that had just been referred to, and had it open before him. After comparing it with what Smith had just written, he said, speaking slowly and hardly *at* him, "This writing is assuredly by the same hand that thirty years ago struck that fatal blow upon my mother's bosom, the only result of which, for many years, was a small chronic induration, but the final result of which was cancer of the breast, with its train of horrors."

"I was drunk when I struck her," said Arthur's father, apologetically. "If I had been then, as I am now, a total abstainer from intoxicating drinks, that unhappy blow would never have been struck. But the habit of excessive drinking is hereditary in my case. My father died of *delirium tremens*—you may probably have heard your mother speak of it?"

"Yes, I have heard her do so frequently, as an excuse for you and as a warning to me. In spite, however, of all her earnest efforts to prevent it, the vice of my father and grandfather has shown itself in me," said Arthur, in a bitter and melancholy manner.

"But you have conquered it. You evidently inherit

your mother's deep religious feelings. That is an advantage that I have not had, for my mother was a hard, matter-of-fact woman, destitute of all religious sentiment, and I take after her in that respect."

"You have refrained from drinking, however, since you have been with me. How long have you been a total abstainer?"

"Only since about a fortnight before I came to be with you. I have been a teetotaler several times before, for a short time, and then broken out drinking again."

"The habit, when seemingly cured," said Arthur, sadly, "is like an old sore that is always liable to break out afresh."

"And when it does so with me," rejoined his father, "it causes me of late to suffer dreadfully. I have some chronic internal malady that has attacked me within the last year or so, that a bout of drinking aggravates into a cruelly acute one."

"Then what you want is to go under proper medical treatment, and to be put out of the way of temptation as regards drink. I was cured of the accursed craving for it by a physician at Ramsgate, Dr. Brookfield, with whom I resided some months last winter. He has made the treatment of dipsomania his special study, and receives patients into his establishment, Undine Hall, on terms according to their requirements. If you had a bed-

room on the top floor of his house, I daresay that he would take you in to live with him permanently, on terms that would not be too high for me to pay. His top-floor rooms are, I believe, very rarely all occupied, so most likely he could receive you as soon as desired. For obvious reasons it is not advisable that you and I should continue to live together. Would you like to go and live at Ramsgate with the medical gentleman I spoke of?"

"Yes, I should," replied Howard the elder; "or, at all events, I should like to go and try how living with him suited me."

"Very well, then, I'll write to him soon to inquire whether he is able to receive you. I shall speak of you as my father. I suppose you don't want now to be thought to be Mr. Smith any longer?"

"No, it doesn't matter now. It was a long time ago that, for reasons I think it better not to explain, I adopted that name as one not likely to attract by its singularity. I have kept it ever since, because hitherto I have had no motive for changing it."

"I presume from the way that you speak about changing your name that you don't mean to tell me much about your doings since you forsook my mother?"

"The less said the better on that subject, I think."

"I should like you to tell me, though, as much,

about what you have been doing for the last thirty-two years, as you do not object to my knowing. It is only natural that I should feel some curiosity on the subject."

"All right, then, I'll tell you something about it." The elder Howard thereupon related to his son (though in a less condensed manner) the following particulars as to how he had passed the many years that had elapsed since he deserted his wife.

Immediately on abandoning Mrs. Howard he went to New York, taking with him about six thousand five hundred pounds in Canadian and other bonds. When in London, until a short time before his departure, he held an appointment in the bill-discounting firm of Messrs. Judas, Barabbas, & Co., and so, at New York he, after a while, opened a bill-discounting and money-lending office, of a certain class, he having managed to get a capitalist there to back him up, who had no scruples about lending money upon usury, but whose social position did not permit him to do so openly. After staying at New York for about eighteen years, and making a good bit of money, his health became very queer indeed, and the doctors recommended him to try a long sea voyage and a thorough change of air and scene. In consequence of this he disposed of his business, and went to Melbourne, Australia. His health was much im-

proved by the time he reached Melbourne, and he there opened an office similar to the one he had had at New York, but it did not answer so well. Intemperate habits growing upon him, he neglected his business, and, after some time, "got up a tree." At length he so came down in the world as to be glad to take a place that was offered to him as waiter at an hotel. While there he saw, in a copy of the London *Times*, the announcement of his wife's death. Knowing that, under her father's will, none of the money settled upon herself could, under any circumstances, come into her husband's hands, he did not in any way take any notice of her death. For though he thought it possible that she might have come into other money than she had when he left her, he felt certain, that after what had occurred, that most particular care would be taken that none of it should ever come into *his* hands. He had managed to find out, since he had come to London, that the brother of his wife, with whom she lived after her desertion, had died before her, but did not know whether she had benefited in a pecuniary way by his death. At this point in his narrative, Arthur's father paused and looked at his son inquiringly.

"No, she didn't benefit in a monetary way at all by his death," said Arthur. "My Uncle Toogood retired, about two years before he died, from the tea-

dealing business in Southwark, left him by his father, and was very unfortunate in various speculations he then embarked in; and, consequently, only left enough money at his death to pay his just debts."

"I'm not at all surprised to hear that. He never was a prudent fellow in financial matters," rejoined Arthur's father. He then resumed his narrative. Shortly after reading of his wife's death he was dismissed from the hotel at Melbourne, for getting dead drunk the evening of a grand dinner party there, and causing great inconvenience by his incapacity to attend to his duties. After that he gave up drinking for a time, and succeeded, through a doctor at Melbourne, with whom he had become acquainted, in getting engaged to walk out with, and attend generally upon, a rich merchant who had become partially paralysed. This gentleman, on account of the unfortunate state of his health, retired altogether from business and decided to go to London, to have the benefit of the advice of eminent physicians there. The gentleman came to London, and he (Howard the elder) came with him as his attendant. Soon after coming to London, however, he lost his situation. He declined to say under what circumstances, nor would he give any particulars as to how he had been spending his life since his dismissal. It must be sufficient, he said, for him to acknowledge that it was through his

own folly that he was living in comparative distress at the house on Clerkenwell Green at the time that, at Sister Scholastica's recommendation, he was engaged by M. Dubois to act temporarily as attendant upon Arthur, little dreaming that the latter was his own son by the wife that he had deserted more than thirty-two years before.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SORELY TEMPTED.

Upon thinking over the matter, Howard the elder felt very well pleased with Arthur's proposition that he should permanently reside with, and be under the professional supervision of, some physician skilled in the treatment of bodily disorders resulting from intemperance. But just as some gay bachelor about to subject himself to the wholesome restraints of marriage may be unable to resist having one farewell, uproarious bachelors' party, so Arthur's father felt that before renouncing drinking, probably for ever, he *must* have one final bout of hard drinking. Nor did he lose much time in yielding to this feeling. Only the day after his discovery that Arthur was his son, when, at two o'clock, he sat down to dinner, he was already in a state of intoxication, and he then impudently openly avowed his bacchanalian intention.

Arthur, very naturally, was extremely vexed and angry with his father for behaving thus, and told him that he must at once prepare to go and live with

some physician undertaking the care of dipsomaniacs, as he would not have him stay with himself a day longer than was required for making necessary arrangements. Howard the elder was not too far gone to be insensible to the imprudence of further provoking his son, so he said, with a hiccough,—"All right then, Arthur, my dear boy, I'll go to the feejhishiansh at Rhamshgate ash shoon ash you like."

Arthur had not yet written to the physician referred to, but he now decided that he would do so that afternoon.

An unfortunate attack of indisposition, however, prevented him carrying out this intention. Since his late severe illness he was subject to occasional attacks of giddiness and drowsiness. He had rather a bad one that afternoon, ending by his sinking, as he sat in his easy-chair, into a state of half-comatose sleep.

As he thus slept, the abnormal condition of his brain caused him to have a distempered dream. In this he imagined himself to be Socrates, in prison, about to drink the cup of hemlock. But, lo! when the cup of poison pressed his lips, he found its contents to be—not hemlock, but brandy.

Opening his eyes at that moment, he found that a glass of brandy was being held to his lips by his tipsy father. Terrified as one who found a lighted

candle about to be introduced into a receptacle full of gunpowder, he dashed away his father's hand, spilling much of the brandy on the floor. The glass was saved from falling by the intoxicated man happening to be grasping it very tightly by the stem.

"What are you doing?" cried out Arthur, in an angry and half-frantic manner.

"I thought you were ill and inshensible—I didn't know you were ashleep—and I wash giving you a glassh of brandy to revive you. But take *half* a glassh, my dear boy, if you don't like to take a whole one—it'll (hiccough) do you (hiccough) good. Itsh firsht-rate French brandy thish."

A bottle of brandy was standing on the table, that Howard the elder had just got in from the grocer's shop close by, and had had put down to Arthur's account there. From this bottle the tipsy man partly refilled the wine-glass, and held it towards Arthur, temptingly.

"No,—take it away! take it away!" exclaimed Arthur, in a terrified manner, excitedly putting his left hand before his eyes, and motioning nervously with his right hand for his father to be off, brandy and all. The inherited evil nature within him whispered temptingly that just half a glass would relieve his present distressing sensations, and was not enough to do him any harm. Thus tempted within and without, he trembled lest he should succumb.

Howard the elder, by way of giving a seducing example, drank up the brandy that he had poured out, smacked his lips, and said, "I never tashted a finer drop of brandy in my life. The flavour of itsh sho shoft. It goesh down like mothersh milk. *Do* jusht try only a *quarter* of a glassh—that *can't* hurt you." With an unsteady hand he then poured out a small quantity of brandy into the glass, and again held it towards Arthur.

"Take it away, I tell you!" fiercely shouted Arthur, standing up, in his excitement, and pointing with an imperious gesture towards the door.

Howard the elder stared at his son in imbecile surprise, but his brain was not too strongly under the stupefying influence of alcohol for him to discern that the latter was getting very angry, and to reflect that to seriously offend him might possibly prove very prejudicial to his own interests. In a manner, then, intended to show that he wished to be obliging, he said,—

"Oh, shertainly, I'll take it away; shertainly I will, my dear boy; but pray don't exshite yourshelf sho."

So saying, having first firmly fitted in the cork, he put the brandy bottle in one of his coat pockets, and, glass in hand, with a staggering gait left the room.

Arthur neither saw nor heard anything of his father

afterwards until the next morning, when he received information that he was in the custody of the police. On going to the police-station, to learn the cause of his father being in this disgraceful position, he obtained the following particulars.

With two young men, belonging to that sponging class who are always ready to drink at another person's expense, whom he had picked up with in the bar of a public-house, he had the previous evening, in a hackney-carriage, been going the round of all the drinking places in Margate and its immediate neighbourhood. The last public-house that he was at had, besides its doors in the street it fronted, also a public entrance at the side, in a lane for foot-passengers only. Out of this side door Arthur's father and his companions, after spending some time in the bar, slipped and ran off, up the lane, with the intention of cheating the hackney-carriage driver out of his fare. But the driver happened to hear the noise made by the runaways' boots, and, looking up the lane, became aware of the trick that was being played upon him. He immediately set off after the three delinquents. The two young men managed to escape, but Howard the elder, being a puffy, short-winded man, on the shady side of fifty, and the driver a comparatively young and a very thin man, was soon overtaken by the latter. The angry driver,

seizing hold of him, Howard the elder struggled desperately to get away, but in vain. At length he managed to get the driver on the ground, who, however, then laid hold of, and clung like grim death to, one of the drunken man's legs. To make the driver leave go, Arthur's father then commenced to kick him with the leg he had free, in a brutal manner. The man's cries for help quickly brought several people to the spot, and in a very short time the tipsy brute was in the hands of the police.

The magistrate before whom Howard the elder was brought considered his behaviour towards the hackney-carriage driver so outrageous that he very decidedly refused to inflict a fine, and committed him, instead, to prison for a month with hard labour.

CHAPTER XXXV.

ARTHUR CONSOLES JEMIMA.

Howard the elder's outbreak of intemperance, and its disgraceful result, caused Arthur to reflect that in the event of his own death, without his having made a will, his father would come into absolute possession of money that he would most likely—instead of living comfortably on it for the rest of his life—quickly fool away by reckless dissipation. Arthur determined then, without delay, to make such a will as should deprive his father of the power of doing this, and that should ensure his being respectably maintained as long as he lived. In furtherance of this object, Arthur one morning repaired to London by fast train, to consult his solicitor, Mr. Hardy, of the firm of Hardy and Ibbettson, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Mr. Hardy was an old friend of the family of the Howards, and, therefore, interested himself more in the matter about which Arthur sought his advice than he would have done with a client who was more of a stranger to him.

After having made to Mr. Hardy a somewhat lengthy statement of matters of fact, that he considered it requisite for him to know, Arthur continued, "Under these circumstances, what I propose to do is this: As soon as my father comes out of prison I purpose placing him, as a permanent boarder, with a physician at Ramsgate, who is very skilful in the treatment of dipsomania. My father is now afflicted with a painful internal malady that drink terribly aggravates: it is, therefore, imperatively necessary that he should be kept from drink. I mean to so arrange that he shall have all that is necessary for his well-being, but that others shall purchase for him all that is requisite to satisfy his reasonable wants—that he shall be kept entirely without pocket-money, in order that he may not be able to procure stimulants. And I wish also so to arrange that my death shall make no difference to him—that trustees, endowed with all necessary powers, shall after my death take my place, and all go on in regard to my father in just the same way as when I was alive."

"Just so. What you propose seems to be the best plan that could be adopted to attain what you wish in reference to your father's future," rejoined Mr. Hardy. "Clearly, it is highly desirable that you should make your will without delay. If, when you

get home, you will write down on a sheet of paper, and then send me by post, full particulars of your wishes on the subject, and also whom you propose to appoint as your executors and trustees, I will, in a day or two, forward a draft will for your approval. On reading it over you can make any alterations and corrections you may think necessary, and afterwards return it to me, when I will at once have it engrossed for you to execute."

After leaving Lincoln's Inn Fields, instead of returning at once to Margate, Arthur went to Richmond, to see Mrs. De Vere and her daughter. He wished to inform them of what had happened to the person whom he believed they knew only as his attendant, and also to tell them that he was, at present, living quite by himself at Margate. Besides this, he wanted to get one or two small works from his bookcase at Mrs. De Vere's.

On arriving at No. 1, Queen's Villas, he was shown into the drawing-room and kept waiting there, alone, for so long that he began to grow impatient. At length Miss De Vere appeared, her eyes very red, and her face having the appearance, to Arthur, of having just been washed, in order to conceal, as far as possible, how much she had been weeping. Her mother, she told him, was upstairs in a prostrate condition, and would not be able to see him. Arthur

expressed the hope that she and Miss De Vere had not just received any very bad news. At this, Jemima's attempt to control her feelings utterly broke down. She burst out crying, and was soon sobbing like a child. As she kept on crying as if her heart would break, Arthur, after the manner of persons of hysterical temperaments, became so sympathetically affected that the tears came into his own eyes. The tears of a man had, in Miss De Vere's eyes, a strangely exaggerated importance. The two tears—there were only two—that trickled down the cheeks of Arthur quite overcame any hesitation she felt to communicate her griefs to him. She became quite ready to impart them all to so sympathetic a friend. A few gently put questions of Arthur's extracted from her full particulars of the troubles that had come upon her and her mother. Telling them took her some considerable time: they may be summarised thus :—

Her mother had formerly lived, as his wife, with Mr. Howard's late attendant, Mr. Smith, in New York, though she had never been married to him. She had made his acquaintance in this country, when she was little more than sixteen years of age, from being a waitress at a refreshment-room in the City that he frequented. Yielding to the temptation that he set before her, of being kept like a lady, she consented to go to America with him as his pretended wife. There, in New

York, he opened a bill-discounting and money-lending office, that proved more profitable than it was respectable. After living with Jemima's mother—whose name was Jones—for nearly eighteen years, during which time they had but one child (Jemima herself) that lived beyond infancy, Mr. Smith, having disposed of his business, abandoned his pretended wife and disappeared from New York. Except a curt note, saying that he did not intend to come back to her, and that she was free to do as she liked, she never heard from him, nor knew whether he was alive or dead, until the Sunday that he came home with Mr. Howard. He left some money in her hands, and also some valuable jewellery and furniture, which she sold. Returning with her child to England, she took a lodging-house at Ramsgate, that, accidentally, she had an opportunity of taking on very favourable terms. There an invalid gentleman, whose name was De Vere, who frequently lodged at the house for months together, and who, paying well, was humoured by Jemima's mother in all his fancies, ultimately married her. Dying two years after, he left her a life interest in what property he had. Since Mr. De Vere's death she had lived about in boarding-houses until she took the house at Richmond they were now in. Jemima herself having quarrelled very seriously with her mother, before Mr. De Vere's

death, had run away from home to her aunt, who kept the Grapes Tavern, near Canterbury, and after a while became barmaid there. Until a short time before her mother had decided to go once again into housekeeping, she had continued unreconciled to her daughter.

On the Sunday that, as Mr. Howard's attendant, Mr. Smith came to No. 1, Queen's Villas, Mrs. De Vere, as soon as she had a little recovered from the shock that his arrival gave her, took an opportunity of coming to an understanding with him. For a pecuniary consideration he agreed not to expose her to shame, but to conduct himself towards her and her daughter as well as if he was a perfect stranger to them. This agreement, during his stay at No. 1, Queen's Villas, he strictly observed, and as he said he had become, and appeared really to be, a teetotaler, Mrs. De Vere had hoped that he would continue strictly to observe the agreement between them so long as she supplied him with a little money from time to time.

But Mrs. De Vere had a friend at Ramsgate, with whom she kept up a familiar correspondence, and who had heard the former had a boarder of the name of Howard, who had had an attack of madness, and who, when convalescent, had gone to Margate. This friend, reading in a local newspaper a report of the

proceedings before the magistrate in connection with Mr. Smith's drunken conduct towards the hackney-carriage driver, and seeing it stated that he was an attendant upon an invalid gentleman of the name of Howard staying at Margate (whose address there was given), had forwarded the newspaper to Mrs. De Vere.

It should here be stated that Arthur's father, at the police-station, had given his name as Smith, and by that name he was spoken of in the newspaper report referred to.

Mrs. De Vere, finding from this report that Mr. Smith had broken out drinking again, her eyes were then opened to the folly of relying upon his maintaining silence as to the past, even though he was paid for doing so. Though money was his god, he was, she knew, when intoxicated, often utterly regardless of the dictates of prudence—madly finding a devilish delight in inflicting pain upon others. She now felt how wrong she had been in her behaviour towards Mr. Peter Brown, of Reading. For since Mr. Howard had been at Margate, she, acting under the belief that she would be able to keep Mr. Smith's tongue quiet, had twice gone to Reading, ostensibly to visit Miss Brown, but really to try and stimulate Mr. Brown into becoming something more than a mere admirer of hers. Her object

was attained. An offer of marriage from that gentleman had been received by her in a letter by yesterday morning's post.

But she now saw that she must decline Mr. Brown's offer. The painful necessity of doing so, however, had filled her with bitter disappointment and rage, and made her thoroughly ill. She was lying on her bed upstairs, with a frightful sick headache, in an utterly prostrate condition.

It was, however, not only on account of her mother's troubles that Miss De Vere (so-called) was so much distressed. Visiting Mr. Howard in his recent illness, Mr. Andrews had been brought into contact with herself, and the engagement between them, that had been broken off, was renewed. They had arranged to get married in a week or two, and she had been busy, lately, preparing her trousseau. Mr. Andrews did not know, however, that she was not a Miss De Vere at all: she had not had the courage to tell him that. Nor was he aware that her father was living, and was a horrid blackguard: she had always told him that her father was dead. She felt that Mr. Andrews ought to be fully informed of these cruel facts; but she was full of fear that, when he did know of them, he might no longer wish to marry her. She wished that she had never been born.

The preceding narration revealed to Arthur, what he had before had some suspicions of, that his own father and Jemima's was the same person. He naturally, then, was not particularly surprised at finding such to be the case; but on his mentioning to Jemima that such was the fact, she looked at Arthur in a peculiar way, that showed she was questioning her own mind as to whether he was as yet quite free from delusions.

Arthur then recounted to her, in detail, the evidence that had satisfactorily proved to himself that the so-called Mr. Smith was indeed his own father.

Jemima, having listened to this, became quite convinced that what Arthur affirmed on the subject was the sober truth. She was, however, so much astonished, and felt so much upset by the trouble that Smith's outrageous conduct had brought upon her mother and herself, that she was thrown into a state of quite distressing perplexity as to in what way the discovered relationship between herself and Arthur would affect her interests—what influence it might have on the relations between herself and her lover, Andrews. After having distinctly admitted to Arthur that she believed him to be her half-brother, she sat looking eagerly at him, waiting to see what he would say or do.

But Arthur was in a painful state of indecision as

to what he ought to say or do. Under the circumstances in which he found himself placed, some display of emotion, he conceived, was called for from him, but then he had no consciousness of having any emotion in particular. Certainly, he might act some part without feeling it—might give a mimic expression of emotion, as if his heart was truly much affected, but what would be the exact nature of the emotion proper for him to simulate through words and gestures? That was what he did not know and could not discern. Nervously he stroked his beard, twiddled his fingers and thumbs, then scratched his head, and looked at Jemima, helplessly—turned his eyes from her face up to the ceiling, then down on to the floor, then out of the window. At length, growing desperate, and feeling that he *must* take some decisive step, he violently pulled his handkerchief from his pocket, and very loudly and very protractedly blew his nose—

——"blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe."

Jemima, being in an excited state, and imagining from Arthur's exhibition of nervousness that he must have something very painful to say to her, and could not summon up courage to say it, burst into tears. By so doing, she prompted Arthur with the next words that he should say.

"Don't cry—don't cry. There's nothing to cry about in what I have just told you."

"I can't help it," replied Jemima, sobbingly.

"But," said Arthur, who, the ice being broken, now felt able to wag his tongue freely once more,—"but just listen to me, while I try and show you that there is really nothing to cry about in the discovery that I am your half-brother. I shall now regard it as my duty, as you have an unworthy father, to try to some extent to take the place that he ought to occupy, and make up for his shortcomings towards you. Leave it to me to explain to Mr. Andrews the matter that troubles you. I will, on my return to Margate, write to him in regard to it a very carefully composed letter. A great deal depends upon the way unpleasant facts are put before people's minds, and so satisfied do I feel that the result will be in accordance with your wishes, that I advise you not in the least to delay the completion of the preparations for your marriage, and I intend to forward you, towards the expenses of preparing your trousseau, a cheque for fifty pounds, directly I get back to Margate."

"Oh, thank you very much! that's extremely kind of you," said Jemima, drying her eyes.

"And you know, I dare say, that I have numerous small houses at Reading. I have one very pretty semi-detached villa, with good garden, that lets at

forty guineas a year; and I shall give it to you as your marriage portion. It will be vacant at Michaelmas, and would, I think, do nicely for you, when married, to live in."

"Oh, thank you!" exclaimed Jemima, looking anxiously into Arthur's eyes, to see if there was any wild look about them. Her searching look quite satisfied her that Arthur was really in his right senses.

"I shall be very happy to give you away," further remarked Arthur, "if you would like me to do so."

"Of course I should like you to do so."

"Very well, then, we will consider that as a thing settled."

"With reference to your mother," continued Arthur, as he rose to go, "I do not see how I can do much to help her. We must trust mainly to the healing hand of time to effect her cure. But you may tell her from me that I do not think there is any very great likelihood of the villain who has destroyed her happiness troubling her again. As soon as he comes out of prison he is going to board with a physician at Ramsgate, who undertakes the charge of dipsomaniacs, and I have no doubt that by the help of law and money that we shall be able to keep him from annoying your mother in any way. I should advise her to let this house furnished, if she can, and to go away and not leave her address here. She might appoint Mr. Wil-

liam Brown her agent, to receive the rent as it should fall due, and to attend to anything else in relation to the house that might need attention. I suppose, though, it's getting rather late in the season for letting furnished houses at Richmond?"

"Yes, it is; but it so happens that Mr. Brown is looking out for a small furnished house in this position for a client of his—a widower, who lives with an unmarried daughter. He wants a small house for a year, and has a strong fancy for just this part of Richmond. I met Mr. Brown yesterday, and he asked me if I knew of any one hereabouts who would be likely to let his or her house. His client, he said, was not one to haggle about terms, if he could get just what he wanted."

"Did you tell your mamma what Mr. Brown said?"

"No; she has been all yesterday and to-day in so distressed a state of mind, that I thought the less said to her the better."

"No doubt she fears this bad father of ours is going to make her life miserable. It would cheer her up a bit if she could be inspired with some hope of that being prevented. In her state she cannot think coolly for herself, but needs somebody to think for her. Let her know that this drunkard, whom she fears, is my father, and that I shall do all I can to prevent him molesting her. Tell her, also, that I strongly advise

her to let her house, and to get away from here before my father comes out of prison. Try as soon as possible and get her consent to your going to Mr. Brown and telling him that she is disposed to let her house for a year."

"I quite agree with what you say. I shall try and persuade mamma to act as you advise."

"My bookcase, books, and other rattletraps that are here, can, if this house is let, be put into store at Richmond, until I have found another permanent home. The house that I am going to give you contains more rooms than you and Andrews, when married, will want. How would you like me to become a lodger of yours? I mean for you to furnish two rooms for me, and I to pay you a weekly rent for them, such as similar furnished apartments are let for at Reading?"

"I should like it very much."

"Still, I sha'n't consider it a thing agreed upon until you have talked the matter over with Andrews."

"Oh, I should think that in any arrangement of that kind he will leave me to do as I like."

"Just as a matter of form, however, I would prefer that you should consult him. But," added Arthur, quickly, as he chanced at that moment to look out of window, "I see Mr. Brown on the other side of the

way, going towards the town. I think I may as well run after him, and speak to him on my way to the railway station. I'll take upon myself to say to him that circumstances have occurred that make it necessary that your mamma should have a change, and that, I believe, she is inclined to let her house. I will ask him to call here to-morrow morning. So good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Jemima, shaking hands with Arthur, warmly. "You won't forget to write, on my behalf, to Mr. Andrews as nicely as you can."

"Shall I tell him anything about the Norman blood that your mamma has more than once proudly assured me flows in your veins?" asked Arthur, teasingly, as he walked across the entrance hall, followed by Jemima.

".Oh, its genuineness is not called in question at all by what has transpired," answered Jemima, laughing.

"How so?" asked Arthur, unlatching the street door and holding it ajar.

"Mamma is the daughter of a Mr. Jones; and she says that it was a tradition in his family, that she quite believes to be true, that he was a descendant of a knight of the name of Jones that came over with William the Conqueror. You have seen the crest of

the Joneses in the album in the drawing-room, haven't you—a griffin?" asked Jemima, tittering.

"Certainly I have, and I have often admired the great appropriateness of the motto beneath that griffin, '*Whilum Ium livum I'llum crowum,*'" rejoined Arthur, on the broad grin.

The crest in the album referred to was a water-colour sketch, that a young gentleman who had boarded with Mrs. De Vere had procured and given to her, with many assurances of its undoubtedly being the crest of her family, a day or two after she had been boasting to him of her Norman blood. The young gentleman was addicted to practical joking.

"You would never persuade mamma to believe otherwise than that griffin *is* the crest of her father's family, and that she has Norman blood," said Jemima, in reply to Arthur's last remark.

"Well, whatever may be the peculiar quality of your mamma's blood, I don't think the Norman blood in your veins can be in sufficient quantity to be worth mentioning. Saxon blood must have drowned it—you're so fond of your beer."

"And I don't inherit that fondness from mamma, for she thinks beer a nasty vulgar drink, and never touches it."

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In a few days he received from Mr. Hardy a draft of his will for approval. Having made some slight alterations in this, he immediately returned it to Mr. Hardy to be engrossed. When this had been done, he, as arranged, was informed of the fact, and without delay he attended at the office of Mr. Hardy and duly executed the will. He then sealed it up, and gave it into the charge of that gentleman, to be delivered up to Messrs. Andrews and Dubois at his death.

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Their wedding took place just a week before Arthur's father was to be liberated from prison. That allowed just sufficient time for Mrs. De Vere to get the house straight before her tenant entered, and to take up her abode somewhere else, where she might reasonably hope to live undiscovered by the liberated prisoner. The bride was given away by Arthur, and the newly wedded pair started for Scarborough to spend their honeymoon.

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He had taken his coat off and had half unlaced his right anatomical boot when, as was frequently the case with him on similar occasions, he fell into a brown study. Leaving his boot partially unlaced, he sat with his eyes steadfastly fixed upon nothing, the following reflections passing through his mind:—

"The celebration of the wedding in which I have taken part to-day is to me a source of much satisfaction. In the character of my half-sister there appears to me to exist a certain amount of giddiness, that, if she had remained unmarried, would have kept me in a state of continued uneasiness about her. But now that she is placed under the beneficent

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moral discipline of the married state, I entertain the brightest hopes of her future. And then, as regards the interests of my friend Andrews in this affair,—have I not acted the part of a true friend towards him in encouraging him to marry this young lady? Certainly she is not at all of an angelic nature; but a woman of that nature could not possibly make a suitable companion for life for my somewhat gross-minded friend. Is the naughty little boy that enjoys playing about in mud and puddles fitted for companionship with the seraphic little girl who delights in singing Dr. Watts's hymns, and who moves about in mortal fear of soiling her white frock? Rather the little girl whose highest pleasure consists in making dirt pies is the one in whose society he is more likely to find happiness. And so a man like Andrews, a little given, as he is, to over-indulgence in beer and butcher's meat, could not possibly be happy with an angelic companion—with a seraphic wife. To a man of his stamp it would inevitably prove dreadfully annoying to have the sweet eyes of a visible angel always fixed upon him reproachfully at every *superfluous* morsel that he put into his mouth, at every *unnecessary* draught of beer that he washed that morsel down with. I feel quite sure that he would not thus be made to reform—to become an abstemious man and to bless his wife's eyes. It was

meet, then, that Andrews should marry such a wife as I have this day given to him—a highly carnivorous young lady, who delights in the flesh of sheep and oxen, and who is also very fond of her beer."

No other thoughts immediately coming into his head, Arthur finished the unlacing of his right boot; but before he began to unlace the left one the following ideas were evolved in his mind, he sitting idle the while:—

"But, though I think my friend and half-sister rightly mated, I do not look upon epicurean enjoyment as the purpose of marriage—far from it. In marriage I see the grand form of moral discipline in the world. But its purpose is frustrated when a couple, though legally married, are morally divorced: when they may be compared to two substances that merely rest mechanically side by side, having no affinity for each other. Oil though married to water must ever live separated from it. Some starting-point of real sympathetic union of tastes is needed for those who would rightly enter upon a married career. Andrews and his wife have at least something in that way to begin with—they have a mutual passionate love of rump steaks and stout; and may I not hope that that may prove to be a germ capable of development into a community of feeling between them in higher things? A mere speck of slimy jelly may be evolved

way, going towards the town. I think I may as well run after him, and speak to him on my way to the railway station. I'll take upon myself to say to him that circumstances have occurred that make it necessary that your mamma should have a change, and that, I believe, she is inclined to let her house. I will ask him to call here to-morrow morning. So good-bye."

"Good-bye," said Jemima, shaking hands with Arthur, warmly. "You won't forget to write, on my behalf, to Mr. Andrews as nicely as you can."

"Shall I tell him anything about the Norman blood that your mamma has more than once proudly assured me flows in your veins?" asked Arthur, teasingly, as he walked across the entrance hall, followed by Jemima.

".Oh, its genuineness is not called in question at all by what has transpired," answered Jemima, laughing.

"How so?" asked Arthur, unlatching the street door and holding it ajar.

"Mamma is the daughter of a Mr. Jones; and she says that it was a tradition in his family, that she quite believes to be true, that he was a descendant of a knight of the name of Jones that came over with William the Conqueror. You have seen the crest of

the Joneses in the album in the drawing-room, haven't you—a griffin?" asked Jemima, tittering.

"Certainly I have, and I have often admired the great appropriateness of the motto beneath that griffin, '*Whilum Ium livum I'llum crowum*,'" rejoined Arthur, on the broad grin.

The crest in the album referred to was a water-colour sketch, that a young gentleman who had boarded with Mrs. De Vere had procured and given to her, with many assurances of its undoubtedly being the crest of her family, a day or two after she had been boasting to him of her Norman blood. The young gentleman was addicted to practical joking.

"You would never persuade mamma to believe otherwise than that griffin *is* the crest of her father's family, and that she has Norman blood," said Jemima, in reply to Arthur's last remark.

"Well, whatever may be the peculiar quality of your mamma's blood, I don't think the Norman blood in your veins can be in sufficient quantity to be worth mentioning. Saxon blood must have drowned it—you're so fond of your beer."

"And I don't inherit that fondness from mamma, for she thinks beer a nasty vulgar drink, and never touches it."

"But drinks shilling claret instead. Is there any affinity between that and Norman blood?"

by Nature into some noble growth, and sensuous enjoyment become in the hands of Providence dung that nourishes the tree of life."

His thoughts ceasing to flow, Arthur went on unlacing his left boot, and succeeded in accomplishing this without further mental interruption. He had, however, only just finished doing so when he had another attack of meditation.

"Marriage, it has been said, is the grave of love; and so it is of epicurean love, but the grave of this ought to be the cradle of a higher and purer love. In the first cry of their first baby, Nature sounds to the young married pair the knell of their hitherto, perhaps, purely self-indulgent life, and summons them to one of more or less self-sacrificing love. The young wife, then, no longer seeks to be the exclusive object of her husband's worship, but delights rather in his enthusiastically joining her in adoring the wonder that she has the glory of being the mother of. Ennobled and morally purified by the sacred sufferings and responsibilities of maternity, frivolous worldly pleasures are cheerfully renounced by her, that she may stay at home and minister to her infant's needs. The young father, too, ceases to be a trifler with life, and goes forth day by day to heroically put his nose to the grindstone, that he may earn the means of becomingly supporting and training up the 'olive

branch' with which Heaven has blessed his home. The first thoughts now, both of husband and wife, are not for themselves, but for their baby—*the* baby, for they speak of it as *the* baby, just as Holy Writ is spoken of as *the* Book. By the mere power of Divine right a blessed little despot has successfully caused them voluntarily to become his enthusiastic worshippers and his devoted slaves. What avail the machinations of the modern enemies of order and of religion—of the agents of hellish Secret Societies against a heavenly despotism such as this—a despotism founded, not on brute force, but on all-conquering love? *The* baby, and not the bayonet, is the grand preserver of religion and of order—the veritable Saviour of Society. Mediæval chivalry had for its watchword, 'God and the ladies!' Such forms of expression are thought profane in these more decorous times; else, for modern chivalrous spirits, making war on materialistic and Malthusian 'sophisters, calculators, and political economists,' would not the finest, the most appropriate watchword, be 'God and the babies!'? For, if these are indeed little heralds of love from the court of Heaven, it is grievous to reflect that, through the culpable negligence of men, the 'insatiate archer' is suffered to find his chief sport in making them the victims of his cruel arrows, and so breaking countless mothers' hearts.

Still, however soon pitiless death may smite them, the little messengers from Divine Love have not altogether visited the earth in vain. Death may destroy the loved, but 'love is strong as death.'

> 'You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.'

The bereaved mother who has lost the dear little object of her tender love retains the love itself. She has tasted a mysterious and beautiful form of emotion, that man can never know and she can never forget. She has had a sublimely unique soul-experience, that has morally transfigured her and made her appear sacred even to the eyes of sensual men.

"It was, perhaps, only a year or so ago that the now disappointed young father took her to be the goddess of his home, adoring her but as a sweet, laughing Venus—now, as he stands with her beside their dead baby, he learns to render her a deeper and a diviner worship as a weeping Mater Dolorosa. Shall I hesitate, then, to see in marriage an institution that is profoundly religious, because married life very often has its beginning in mere intoxication of the senses? Not so—the 'beginning of miracles' that Jesus did was the changing water into *wine* at a *marriage* feast."

At this point in his reflections Arthur, seemingly as if wishing to exclude any direct images of the

external world from his mind, and so to be able to meditate without any distractions, closed his eyes. Presently he gave a succession of nods, as if answering some mental inquiry, repeatedly, in the affirmative. The last of these was an extraordinarily emphatic one, so much so as to almost rick his neck, and appeared to signify that the matter was finally decided in his mind, for immediately after he opened his eyes. Still, he seemed even then so lost in thought as not to know what he was doing, for he went to the side of his bed, and, without finishing undressing, was about to tumble in between the sheets, anatomical boots and all. But, on raising his left leg, as the first movement towards getting into bed, he was struck by the unusual weight of his foot. Looking at it, he saw the boot that, though unlaced, was still on it, and this manifestly quite called him to his senses, for he exclaimed, "What a dreamy fool I am!" A doubt then seized him as to whether he had said his prayers, as he was in the habit of doing before beginning to undress, so he kneeled down and said them. Then, keeping his eyes open by a great effort, and resolutely resisting being seduced by his mind into reverie or dreaming, he finished undressing as quickly as he could, and in a very few minutes he was in bed and asleep.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

IN THE DANE JOHN, CANTERBURY.

When Arthur first went to Margate he intended not to wait many days before going to Canterbury, to see his friend, M. Dubois, for the latter had, a fortnight before, left London to settle at Canterbury. A very prosperous professor of French there, through the sudden death of a rich relation, came into considerable property, and had to go to France without delay. Having no occasion any longer to earn money professionally, he did not propose to return to England. M. Dubois being a friend of his, and only doing but moderately well in London, he proposed to him to come to Canterbury and take to his rather high-class and remunerative connection. His only condition was that M. Dubois should take the furniture of his house at a very moderate price. For this he did not require money down, but was willing to let the amount stand for one year, bearing interest at five per cent. M. Dubois was to have the option of either paying it in one sum at the expiration of the year, or

and his wife should be installed in the villa at Reading that Arthur had settled upon Jemima (Mr. Hardy and M. Dubois being made her trustees), it was definitely arranged that Arthur was to be received as their lodger. This could not be, however, for some little time, as the villa would not be vacant until Michaelmas.

On getting back to his lodgings at Margate, the evening of the wedding day, Arthur, from the excitement attending the, to him, novel position of giving a bride away, and from the exertion of packing up his books and things in general, was considerably fatigued. He entered his bedroom, with the intention of going early to bed.

He had taken his coat off and had half unlaced his right anatomical boot when, as was frequently the case with him on similar occasions, he fell into a brown study. Leaving his boot partially unlaced, he sat with his eyes steadfastly fixed upon nothing, the following reflections passing through his mind:—

"The celebration of the wedding in which I have taken part to-day is to me a source of much satisfaction. In the character of my half-sister there appears to me to exist a certain amount of giddiness, that, if she had remained unmarried, would have kept me in a state of continued uneasiness about her. B[illegible]he is placed under the beneficent

longer. Take a run over to Canterbury the first fine day after you receive this, and have a little pleasant intercourse with your friends there. That will cheer you up a bit, and do you a world of good."

The morning that he received Andrews's letter being a very beautiful one, Arthur resolved to delay no longer, but to take a return railway ticket and go to Canterbury at once, and visit his friends.

Arriving between one and two o'clock at the house of M. Dubois, whom he decided to call on the first, he found that gentleman just about to sit down to a solitary dinner. His wife and children had gone to spend the day a little way in the country, at the house of some people with whom they had become friendly. Arthur, being rather hungry, was not sorry to be invited to share the professor's repast, and the latter was pleased to have a companion to dine with him, as he particularly disliked taking his meals alone.

Ordinary conversation as to the recent and present states of health and doings of themselves and their connections occupied them while dining. It very much gratified Arthur to learn that his friend was extremely well satisfied with the professional connection that he had taken to at Canterbury, and also that a recent work of his, entitled "A History of French Literature for the Young," had proved a great success.

After dinner, as they drank strong black coffee, and M. Dubois smoked a cigarette, Arthur fell into arguing upon religious matters, and at length became considerably excited. M. Dubois knew that in his friend's then state of health anything like religious excitement was most pernicious for him; and so, with the object of breaking off the discussion into which they had fallen, he said, "It seems to me precious hot indoors to-day, and I have only just a playground for the children at the back of the house—nothing worthy of being called a garden—suppose we adjourn to the Dane John *—it's close by. There is a seat there in a pleasant shady spot, where I often go and sit for a short time of an afternoon."

Arthur assenting to this proposition being adopted, the two friends were, in a few minutes, in the Dane John, tranquilly lounging on the seat referred to by M. Dubois.

"Miss Brown is staying with a relation of hers here, Andrews tells me," said Arthur.

"Yes," answered M. Dubois; "I have frequently seen her in this garden, about this time, for the last fortnight, and we have had several quite philosophical conversations together. I shouldn't be surprised if we were to see her here to-day."

M. Dubois had scarcely uttered these words when

* The Public Gardens of Canterbury.

Miss Brown, who, at some little distance off, where she was partially hidden by some evergreen bushes, had seen the professor and Arthur enter the garden, came up and shook hands with them. She congratulated Arthur on looking better in health than he used to do.

"My skin has got tanned by the sun since I have been at Margate; and then I have just dined, so that my cheeks are slightly flushed from indigestion," objected Arthur.

"Nonsense! that's the way you always talk. Does he not really look very much better than he used to do, M. Dubois?"

"I never saw him look so well before," replied the professsor. "If he will only refrain from troubling his head about subjects that it is not strong enough to deal with, he'll soon get all right, I believe. Above all, he should be most careful to have nothing more whatever to do with the Rev. Alfred Tudor—he's an eccentric fanatic. Don't you agree with me, Miss Brown?"

"Oh, quite so. Pray don't let Mr. Tudor put you through any more spiritual exercises, Mr. Howard."

"I wish that I could make you both understand," said Arthur, "that if I had only followed the advice given me by Mr. Tudor, I, most likely, should not have had the illness from which I have just recovered,

He strongly advised me, above all things, to strive to gain self-command, and earnestly warned me against the perils of indulging in religious excitement. Instead, however, of following his advice, I, after my course of spiritual exercises, indulged in spiritual intoxication to such an extent that it, at length, culminated in a state of exaltation in which nothing less would satisfy me than perishing gloriously in leading a forlorn hope of humanity in an assault upon Hell. Had I acted as Mr. Tudor advised, I should, instead, have been content, as a raw recruit, to live for a long time patiently and diligently persevering in practising 'the goose step.' "

M. Dubois looked significantly at Miss Brown, smiled, and shook his head.

Miss Brown looked significantly at M. Dubois, smiled, and shook her head. Then, addressing both the professor and Arthur, she said, "Pray don't let me keep you standing."

They had risen as she approached them, and had remained standing.

"We will sit down if you will do so first," said M. Dubois.

"I am afraid that I might be in the way—that you want to talk together quietly, without any one else being present."

"On the contrary, I brought Mr. Howard here in

the hope that we might meet you. I think a little of your agreeable conversation might have a very happy effect upon his mind."

"You flatter me—but I really do think that I am fortunate enough to amuse him a little sometimes."

"I should be very glad," said Arthur, "if you would let us have the pleasure of your company for even a *little* longer, supposing that you may not be able, or not think proper, to give us the greater pleasure of having it *much* longer."

"I have to meet my aunt at the gate there as soon as she makes her appearance: till then I shall be very pleased to sit and talk to you." So saying, Miss Brown sat down at one end of the bench by which they were standing. Arthur sat down by her side, and M. Dubois by his side.

"For the present you really must, my dear friend," said M. Dubois to Arthur, "be guided by the advice of your friends, and avoid exciting yourself about religion. I cannot but think that after the mental illness you have just had even Mr. Tudor himself would give you the same advice. Have you seen him lately?"

"I went to see him just before I came to Margate, and he told me that I must regard it as my duty to let my brain remain idle for a long time."

"Your head wants rest," rejoined M. Dubois.

"But it's very dismal to have to try to keep one's mind in a state like an almost stagnant pool."

"Never mind," said Miss Brown, soothingly, "an almost stagnant pool may grow water-lilies."

"And when your mind does get stronger," continued M. Dubois, "I earnestly advise you to occupy it with science rather than religion. Science discourages fantastic imaginings, and keeps the attention on facts that can be verified; its study supplies, then, just the mental discipline that you require. Besides, man is not a spiritual being in a spiritual world, but a material being in a material world. We are poor creatures whose fate it is to live amidst vast and dangerous machinery in motion. Whirling cog-wheels threaten on every side to tear and rend us, and ever-smashing steam hammers to miserably crush us. But by making ourselves intimately acquainted with this machinery of Nature—the capacity to do which we have at length discovered that we possess—we may often escape many of the cruel injuries with which it menaces us, and even make its working subservient to our wishes. Manifestly, then, the sensible course for intelligent creatures so placed to pursue is, to seek to conquer that material world around them, and to make of it a slave to minister to the lessening of their pains and to the increase of their pleasures."

"But those," objected Arthur, "who are unfortu-

nately so constituted as to find it impossible to rest satisfied with any conquest of the material world, however complete, who are tormented with the desire to conquer and possess something more than that—what are those people to do to relieve their wretchedness?"

"Why," answered the professor, shrugging his shoulders in a droll manner, "as there is no other world for them to conquer they can only, like——"

Arthur forgetting for the moment that he was no longer a lunatic, and so privileged to violate good manners, burst out laughing. Abruptly breaking off in the midst of his remark, M. Dubois said,—

"I am pleased to see you so merry, Mr. Howard. What was it that amused you so much?"

"I saw that 'Macedonia's madman' had come into your head, and was about to be brought upon the stage to shed the *usual* tears, and that so tickled my fancy that I could not help laughing."

"But though Mr. Howard laughs at him," said Miss Brown, "I really think Alexander the Great, by that memorable fit of weeping of his, set a very good example. I know that when I was in a weak state of health, from having overgrown myself, and used to feel vague aspirings after I didn't know what, I often went into my bedroom and had 'a good cry,' and I always found that it gave me great relief."

"Just so," rejoined M. Dubois, "and I was going to say to our friend here that for those undefinable hopeless longings of the mind that lie altogether out of the power of scientific philosophy to satisfy, sorrowful poetry gives a natural expression to what is often beneficial. Reading Byron, or Alfred de Musset, is a kind of intellectual weeping, and, like physical weeping, will really give relief if not indulged in beyond the point at which it is natural for reaction to take place."

"In the same way," said Miss Brown, "that I find sea-bathing braces me up if I don't stop in the sea too long."

"'Tears, idle tears, I *now* know what you mean,'" exclaimed Arthur. "You are simply mother Nature giving the faces of her weak children a bracing salt-water bath. And as tears are only globules of salt water, what is the sea but an ocean of tears? Bathing in it, then, must be like crying all over one's body—no wonder it often makes people ill, then, if they do that very long."

"You ridiculous creature!" rejoined Miss Brown. "Will you leave off talking nonsense, and let me hear M. Dubois finish what he has to say on the uses of sorrowful and despairing poetry?"

"The fact is," said the professor, rising from the seat, after having looked at his watch, "I find that I

must not stay to say anything more, otherwise I shall fail to keep an appointment that I have, and that I had almost forgotten." With the effusive politeness for which his countrymen are remarkable, he then took leave of his companions.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A MILD FLIRTATION.

As soon as M. Dubois had got out of hearing, Arthur, turning to Miss Brown, as she sat beside him in the Dane John, remarked,—

"It really seems to me that M. Dubois, by dint of incessant repetition of the idea, has talked himself into the belief that Nature, in its entirety, is actually a machine. He seems to forget that to talk about Nature as a vast machine is to make use of language that is purely metaphorical—metaphorical language that may be very well used to give a convenient ideal representation of certain aspects of Nature, but miserably inadequate to convey any correct idea of her as a whole."

"You said of *her* as a whole," interrupted Miss Brown, laughingly. "Is not that popular way of speaking of Nature as a woman, making use of a metaphor less true than that of M. Dubois's?"

"No; because it is easy to associate with the idea of personality the infinite variety of the whole of

Reading, where papa's offices are. Now that papa has had Mr. Andrews for some time as his partner, he intends to take matters easier in business than he has done hitherto."

"Quite right. I suppose, as you designed Raphael Lodge, your papa has furnished it according to your taste?"

"Entirely. It is furnished from top to bottom in the mediæval style—no furniture in any other style is to be permitted in the house—even the furniture in the kitchen is mediæval."

"Even the furniture in the kitchen mediæval! How will your servants like that?"

"Oh, our cook, at all events, having seen it, likes it very much. She was cook for several years in the family of one of the officials of the South Kensington Museum, and while in that situation learnt to become a person of artistic tastes. I quite envy her, I can assure you, some of the knickknackery that she has in her bedroom. But I was mistaken in saying, absolutely, that no other than mediæval furniture would be permitted in Raphael Lodge. I should have said with one exception: papa insists upon having, when staying there, the big easy-chair that he is accustomed to doze in after dinner. Of course you know the one I mean—isn't it ugly?"

"Ugly as a hippopotamus, but awfully comfortable

to sit in. I have tried it, you know. In comparison with it, in that respect, a mediæval easy-chair is a mediæval instrument of torture. Still, I can't help feeling, with you, that it will look dreadfully out of place amidst brand-new antique furniture: but I'll tell you how you might partially remedy this. Have a loose case made, to thoroughly envelope the chair, of crétonne chintz with a gloomy Gothic pattern—such, for instance, as the representation of sections of the crypt of a cathedral on a black ground."

"That's a capital idea," rejoined Miss Brown. "I shall get our upholsterer to do as you advise directly I get home. What a naturally inventive mind you have, Mr. Howard! Do come and see us at Raphael Lodge as soon as you come to Reading: there are many little things there that I am not quite pleased with as they are at present, and I should like to have your opinion as to how they could be best altered and improved."

"You will really make me quite vain, Miss Brown," remonstrated Arthur, yet feeling pleased.

"I don't mind if I do make you somewhat vain," rejoined Miss Brown: "vanity leads the peacock to unfold and display his plumage. And there's another matter, too, in which I shall want you to give me the benefit of your opinion and advice—in regard to the finishing of a rather ambitious picture that I

have recently begun. Since I have been at Canterbury I have commenced a large water-colour drawing of the choir of the Cathedral. This is to form the ground-work of a composition of an imaginative kind, to be entitled "The Choir of Canterbury Cathedral in the Olden Time." I shall place in the choir a magnificent altar, at which priests will be seen celebrating High Mass. This picture I intend as the first to be finished in my new studio at Raphael Lodge—I have such a *darling* studio there, you know."

"Well, I didn't exactly *know* that," rejoined Arthur, "but I fully believe it, seeing that it was *you* who designed that studio."

"Thank you," answered Miss Brown, smiling. "But, in the finishing of the water-colour that I speak of, I think most likely you will be able to give me some efficient help—I mean, when I set about my representation in it of some particular stage of the high celebration of the Roman Mass. When I was in London, studying at South Kensington, I went several times to High Mass at the 'Pro;' but I didn't understand at all the meaning of what I saw. If, then, in regard to some particular part of the Mass, I attempt to artistically depict what I do not intelligently apprehend, there will be danger of my perpetrating some stupid blunder. You, as a Ritualist, I presume, would be able to enlighten my darkness in the matter."

"Well, I believe that I could explain to you pretty well the symbolic meanings of the Mass. Determined to understand that ceremony, I bought various Roman Catholic books upon the subject, and carefully studied them. All knowledge concerning it that I may have thus acquired it will give me great pleasure to place at your service."

"I have been told, or read somewhere," rejoined Miss Brown, "that the most trivial actions of the celebrants of Mass, and everything connected with it, have a symbolical signification."

"Yes, that is so. Speaking generally, the ceremony of the Mass may be regarded as a sort of beautiful symbolic panorama, in which, at one particular point, the symbol is presumed to become identical with divine Reality, just as at one point of the evolution of human history, man, who amidst the *appearances* of Nature is the image or symbol of God, became in one consecrated Person actually God, and offered Himself up as a sacrifice to the will of God. If you follow my advice in the matter you will, in your imaginary picture of "The Choir of Canterbury Cathedral in the Olden Time," represent some glorious martyrdom as being commemorated by the Church."

"Why?"

"Because then you must represent the drapings of the altar, the curtains of the tabernacle on it, and the

vestments of the officiating priest and deacons, as all of glowing red, and by so doing you would give brightness and warmth to your picture."

"Very well, then, it shall be considered a settled thing that in it I am to represent a martyrdom as being commemorated. I shall be delighted to have an excuse for making the central part of my picture all aglow with objects of a brilliant crimson colour. How soon do you think you will be coming to Reading?"

"I am not quite certain at present. You know the Andrewses don't get possession of their house until Michaelmas. I suppose that I shall come to live with them some time in October."

"And we, as I said just now, shall be at Raphael Lodge until quite the end of October, so *do* try and come, at least, before that month is over."

"I certainly will, as you wish it; but I should have thought that your great friend Mr. Jelley, whom you have already at Serfswell, would have been well able to help you in the various ways you very flatteringly ask me to do."

"You are quite mistaken. In regard to the Roman Catholic Church he knows how to very clearly prove its doctrinal teaching to be erroneous, but he knows very little about its ceremonies. And in regard to artistic matters, music is the only art he knows any-

thing about. Of that he is so passionately fond, that it really makes him quite indifferent to all the other arts, or other things of an artistic kind."

"Ah! I see—quitè a musical enthusiast."

"Quite. And he sings beautifully, as well as plays beautifully on the violin. He has such a lovely voice, a sweet tenor. Sweet, yet not weak, but full-toned—a full-toned, mellifluous tenor. My soprano voice, you know, is a *little* too thin to be effective in solos, but in duets with Mr. Jelley, papa says, its thinness is quite forgotten, and our two voices seem as if they had been expressly made to go together."

"By-the-bye," said Arthur, significantly, "is Mr. Jelley married?"

"No, he is not married. Why?" Miss Brown tried to look unconscious, but could not help colouring.

"Oh, it has just struck me that if he is still a bachelor he very likely may not remain one much longer. I mean that perhaps before very long I may have the pleasure of congratulating you upon having become Mrs. Jelley."

"What nonsense! I never heard any one talk such nonsense as you do—I never *did!*" exclaimed Miss Brown. And then, as from the expression of his face she saw that Arthur had noticed her heightened colour, she blushed still more at having blushed. To stop him talking more nonsense about Mr. Jelley,

and so adding to her confusion, she decided to promptly start some other topic for them to converse about. Giving utterance to the first that chanced to suggest itself to her, she said,—

"Oh, who do you think I saw some weeks ago in London?"

"I'm sure I don't know."

"The Sister who nursed you last autumn, when you were so ill from over-study—Sister Agnes. She is now lady-principal of the community she belongs to."

"Indeed! Did you meet her in the street?"

"No. I was staying for a few days with my friends at South Kensington, and a relation of theirs being very ill, and wanting a nurse, I undertook—knowing how well she had nursed you — to see if Sister Agnes could be engaged for her. I found, however, as I have said, that the Sister had become lady-principal of her community. But she undertook to send another nursing Sister to the patient for whom I inquired. And I *was* surprised when I found that that other Sister was the niece of your former landlady at Daisy Cottage. You never told me that she had become a nursing Sister."

"The fact is," answered Arthur, his manner showing him to be in much perplexity, "that I have been left in a state of great incertitude myself upon the matter."

"But have you not seen her at Margate lately? The old lady, the relation of my friends, whom she went to nurse, getting better, was sent by the doctors to Margate, and went into lodgings there on the Fort, where you, I understand, have also been lodging. Sister Scholastica—for that is how Rotha Redbreast is now called—accompanied her patient. I should have thought, as the latter is able to take open-air exercise, and yet is not thought well enough to be left to do so alone, that you would have often seen her nurse out with her."

"I have frequently seen on the Fort a Sister exactly like Rotha Redbreast, in company with an invalid old lady," answered Arthur, seeming painfully puzzled. "I have sat more than once on the same seat with them, and talked to them. I——"

"And the name of the nurse with the old lady—have you heard that?" interrupted Miss Brown.

"Yes; it is the same as you have mentioned, Sister Scholastica."

"Very well, then, that *is* Rotha Redbreast that you have seen at Margate. But I see that I know more about her than you do. She did not, I presume, appear to recognise you at all—treated you as a perfect stranger, and that puzzled you?"

"You are quite right in what you presume."

"A blow on the head," continued Miss Brown,

"that she sustained through falling down in a fainting fit, in the street, in London, it appears, affected her memory in a very singular manner. The remembrance of her whole life previous to the blow was clean blotted out from her mind."

"How did you learn that?"

"I was told by Sister Agnes when I called upon her. Sister Scholastica, whom she proposed to send to the sick relation of my friends, was not in at the time, but Sister Agnes has an album containing the photographs of all the nurses under her. She showed me that of Sister Scholastica as being the portrait of the Sister she would send to the relation of my friends. I at once recognised the photograph as that of Rotha Redbreast, and on my saying so, the lady-principal at once admitted that Rotha Redbreast and Sister Scholastica were the same person."

"But on becoming aware how singularly her memory had been affected, I should have thought she would have been filled with curiosity and anxiety to know something of her past life before receiving that blow. Has she somehow been purposely prevented making inquiries to allay such natural curiosity and anxiety, or, perhaps designedly, led to make them in a way that should lead to nothing?"

"No; she wishes herself to remain in ignorance, for the most part, of that portion of her life that was prior

to her sustaining the blow on the head we are speaking of. She knows that her parents were respectable working people, residents in London, who both died several years ago; that she has no relations in England to look after her, and that the only near relations she has at all are a very poor aunt and her children, in Australia, whose address is unknown; that she herself had been employed at a London milliner's; that she was taken up insensible in the street in London by the police, and taken to a hospital; and, I think, if I remember rightly what Sister Agnes told me, that is about all she does know in regard to her antecedents."

"Does she not know that she once lived with an aunt at Serfswell?"

"No. I asked Sister Agnes that question. She told me that through the influence of one of the medical men at the hospital to which she was taken by the police, she was, on leaving, placed in a Home for Female Idiots, conducted by some rich and charitable High Church ladies. These, when, after a little while, through Rotha's health improving, the real permanent effect of the blow she had sustained was discovered, regarded it as Providential. Sister Agnes did not, of course say so, but I suppose the High Church ladies knew that Rotha Redbreast had been a Methodist at Serfswell, and they feared that

if she knew that, and should get into communication with the Methodists there, that might frustrate their wish of making her a strict Anglican Catholic. However that may be, Rotha having become much attached to them, they easily persuaded her to adopt their view of the matter. They persuaded her then that the seemingly accidental blow on her head was Providential; that through it she had been caused by Heaven to drink of the waters of oblivion, that she might be delivered from the paralysing remembrance of the sins and sorrows of her past career, and have a golden opportunity of leading a new and happier life in future. And Sister Agnes asked me, should I see Sister Scholastica at any time, to be content to be treated by her as a perfect stranger. It would be unkind, she said, to do anything that might tend to unsettle Sister Scholastica's mind, as she is so very happy in her present condition. And I told her that I quite agreed with her. Don't you think I did right?"

"Yes, I think that you did quite right. I shall myself take care to act in accordance with Sister Agnes' wish. I shall make it a religious duty, whenever I may meet Sister Scholastica—and I presume I shall occasionally see her again at Margate—to treat her as a perfect stranger, and never to speak of Serfswell before her."

"I am glad to find that you agree with me," rejoined Miss Brown; and then, after a moment or two, she went on to say,—

"I understand that in being re-educated Sister Scholastica evidenced a strong innate tendency to speedily reacquire such knowledge as she already had before the blow on the head. Reading and writing, for instance, she re-learnt in an extremely short time indeed. I suppose that, in connection with her past experiences prior to the blow, it was rather merely her *intellectual* memory that was permanently affected by it, than the memory of the whole of her mind."

"I suppose so," rejoined Arthur, somewhat abstractedly.

"I did not know," continued Miss Brown, anxious to get some philosophical remarks on the subject from Arthur,—"I did not know that injury to the head was ever followed by the singular result that it has been in the case of Sister Scholastica."

"O yes, I have read of one or two similar cases. Such a singular result is, though, I believe, extremely rare," answered Arthur, and then, to Miss Brown's disappointment, he relapsed into silence.

It then struck Miss Brown that perhaps her having told Arthur, a short time before, that she had never heard any one talk such nonsense as he did, had

made him diffident about freely expressing before her some odd or fanciful reflections that were then passing through his mind; so she said to him, encouragingly,—

"Don't be so silent—talk to me. I generally *do* so like to hear you talk; you make me feel afterwards as if I had had my brains stirred up with a spoon."

"Stirring up is one legitimate function of a spoon," rejoined Arthur, looking at Miss Brown in a meaning way, as if he pleaded guilty to being a "spoon."

"How naughty you are! You know I didn't mean to say that *you* are a 'spoon,'" said Miss Brown, playfully giving Arthur a rap on the knuckles with a book that she had in her hand.

"What book is that you have?" asked Arthur, making a playful attempt to clutch the book, but failing to catch hold of it through Miss Brown sharply withdrawing it.

"It's a work on a subject that I don't think you ought to trouble yourself about, sir. It is not the sort of work that usually interests me, but my curiosity has been excited through knowing something about the writer of it. She is a nursery governess in a family who are great friends of mine, and she is considered very clever. She is only a little over seventeen, and yet, a year before she published this book that I now have

in my hand, there appeared in a magazine some very pretty verses of hers, that have been set to music, entitled, 'Do angels ever laugh?'"

"'Do angels ever laugh?'" echoed Arthur, in an assumed meditative manner. "I find it difficult to conceive that they ever actually laugh. I can only imagine that the ludicrous follies of miserable man may sometimes cause them to smile through tears of pity, making these sparkle like the waters of life freshly drawn up from the well of Truth."

"But I really do not find it inconceivable that angels may sometimes laugh," said Miss Brown.

"Their laughter, then, must be of a more ethereal kind than that of mortals. It quite shocks me even to think of the possibility of an angel laughing, say, for example, like our friend Mrs. Andrews. When she laughs, what an ear-splitting, convulsive explosion there is! And how she then opens her mouth—just as if she was going to swallow an American oyster *all* at once!"

Miss Brown burst out laughing. Happily she had a small mouth and pretty teeth.

"My scepticism about angelic laughter is dissipated," cried Arthur. "You have convinced me that angels *do* laugh. *Now* won't you tell me what the title of that book is?"

"No; I won't tell you the title of it, as I don't

want you to borrow it from a circulating library, or to buy it."

"Tell me what it's about, then—what the purpose is of the young authoress in writing it?"

"I don't mind telling you that; but I think if I read a few words from her preface that will be the best way of explaining it to you. Listen." Miss Brown then read from the preface of the book in her hand as follows:—

"'As sermons are less read than tales, and as children's powders are often successfully administered in raspberry-jam, I have felt encouraged to seek to meet a pressing want of the youth of both sexes, by giving, in the form of an agreeable story, an, I hope, adequate explanation of the origin of evil.'"

"You needn't have been so anxious to keep the title of the work from me," said Arthur. "I know too well that my enfeebled brain is not in a fit state to trouble itself about the origin of evil. But it is highly satisfactory to me to learn that the treatment of that subject has fallen into the competent hands of young lady novelists."

"Is it really!" rejoined Miss Brown, laughing. "And, do you know, my satisfaction at your having given up the study of the origin of evil would be much increased if I knew also that you intended to wait a *very* long while before renewing your efforts to speedily establish the millennium."

"I promise to wait until I have your permission to begin afresh."

"Your patience, then, is likely to be severely tested," rejoined Miss Brown, and then pausing, she appeared momentarily at a loss for anything further to say. Then she added, in a quick way, as if something had suddenly suggested itself,—

"But you haven't told me whether you have heard from Mr. Andrews since he has been at Scarborough."

"I had a letter from him this morning," answered Arthur. "He and his wife are enjoying themselves immensely at the 'Queen of Watering-places.' They have had glorious weather, as yet, nearly every day they have been there."

"I'm very happy to hear that. It always seems to me like a frustration of Nature's beneficence when I hear of people being hindered enjoying their honeymoon."

"Yet the eminent philosophic mad-doctor, Dr. Maudsley," rejoined Arthur, "speaking, in one of his books, of marriage, suggests that it would not be very absurd to maintain that men and women should enter into it soberly and *rather sadly*."

"Dr. Maudsley, then, couldn't have known what he was talking about when he said that," retorted Miss Brown. "I don't like those mad-doctors."

"I admit," answered Arthur, "that I do not see any reason for my friend Andrews and his wife spending their honeymoon 'rather sadly.' Physically, they have good appetites, good digestions, and good health generally. Mentally, they have good spirits, and an instinctive aptitude for discerning the bright side of things. Then, again, their choice of one another as life companions has been a purely spontaneous one. Why, then, should they enter upon their married career 'rather sadly'? For my part, my reason approves of the picture of their conjugal future that is, figuratively, painted by my fancy. This gaily paints them as passing on hand-in-hand on life's journey, while smiling Cupids strew their path with roses."

"A large amount of happiness is no doubt possible to them," rejoined Miss Brown, "because they do not require the fulfilment of impossible conditions to make them happy. They have little or no sense of the infinite within them."

"And consequently," rejoined Arthur, "they have not ever mockingly before their mental vision 'the unreach'd paradise of *our* despair.'"

Miss Brown's answer to this remark was to compose her features to an expression of touching sadness, and to turn her soft eyes upon Arthur with a look in them that was meant to say, "Go on."

"I think," went on Arthur, gazing as if he had a distant vision before his eyes — "I think that a very jolly-looking elderly lady, at the gate there, is beckoning towards this seat."

"Oh, I see! there is my aunt," exclaimed Miss Brown, looking towards the gate referred to; "so I must now wish you good-bye."

Miss Brown jumped up from the seat, and Arthur directly afterwards followed her example. Then, after hurried expressions of mutual good wishes for each other's welfare and hearty shaking of hands, the two friends parted.

As soon as Miss Brown had left him, to run to her aunt, Arthur reseated himself loungingly upon the garden bench. After a little while he thought that he would go and pay a visit to the Cathedral. With its beautiful Norman choir actually before his eyes, he proposed to imaginatively picture to himself a High Mass according to the Roman rite as being celebrated within it. He proposed to mentally go through there the solemn ceremony from beginning to end. By so doing he might, he conceived, be perhaps led to decide—for at present he felt quite undecided about this—as to what particular stage in the celebration of High Mass he should select for Miss Brown to represent in her ambitious water-colour drawing of "The Choir of Canterbury Cathedral in the Olden Time."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

A WOMAN'S WILL.

A SHORT time after Miss Brown had quitted him in the Dane John, Arthur rose from the seat on which he was lounging, with the intention of making his contemplated visit to the Cathedral. When he was very near it he, on turning the corner of a street, was much and disagreeably surprised to behold his father on the opposite side of the way, standing looking about him. As he happened at the moment to be looking in another direction to that in which Arthur was coming, he, of course, did not see the latter.

Until he thus suddenly caught sight of him at Canterbury, Arthur had fully believed his father to be at Ramsgate. For only two days before he had himself attended at Maidstone gaol (his father's term of imprisonment having expired), and from there gone with his father to the home for inebriates at Undine Hall, Ramsgate, and had there left him under the charge of Dr. Brookfield. He had bought for his father all clothes

and other things that he considered it necessary for him to have, but had carefully avoided giving him a farthing for pocket-money. And he believed his father had left prison absolutely without money, because he had entered it in the same penniless condition, for his pocket was picked by some one in the crowd that gathered round him while he was kicking the prostrate hackney-carriage driver, for the assault upon whom he was imprisoned. How, then, had he obtained the money requisite to pay his fare to Canterbury? What, too, was the object of his visit?

Just as Arthur was asking himself these questions his father glanced towards the street at the corner of which his son was. He did not see him though, for a covered carrier's cart had drawn up a moment before, so as to hide Arthur. Peeping from behind this, Arthur then saw his father turn into the bar of a public-house close by.

At seeing this he felt terribly disappointed and vexed. For as his father had managed to be a teetotaler for many weeks, when acting as his attendant, simply from having before his mind great recent suffering caused by intemperance, so he fully hoped it would have been with him, at least for about the same period of time, at Dr. Brookfield's, as he had suffered excruciating pain part of the time he was in prison. Thus Arthur was quite unprepared to find

his father *breaking out* so soon after this. He had no doubt now that his father had pawned—he had no watch—some or all of the new things that had been bought for him, and so had procured money. By this means though, Arthur thought, his father could not have obtained much, for he had himself purposely bought him things on which only a very little money could be raised. But having broken out—the tiger in him having tasted blood—"He, no doubt," Arthur mentally said, "burns to glut himself to satiety, instead of tantalisingly having to finish his drinking bout on the very moderate sum he has procured. I see now how it is that he has come to Canterbury. Prepared with some artfully trumped-up story to tell me in order to extort money from me, he has been to my present home at Margate, and learning there that I had gone to Canterbury for the day, he, with feverish impatience, has followed me here. To punish him, I will try to give him the slip, and let his journey to Canterbury prove to him a fruitless one. I must not go, then, to the Cathedral, because near the time for afternoon service he will very likely be there looking out for me. I had better get out of the city altogether, and take a walk in the country. In the quiet of green lanes and fields I shall be able, without distraction, to reflect upon what further steps it will be necessary for me to take

in order to save this unhappy father of mine from the accursed slavery of his inherited vice."

While walking in a direction that, he conceived, would take him most quickly into the country, but still being in one of the streets of the city, he thought that as somewhat threatening clouds seemed gathering, he had better bend his steps towards some spot where, in the event of a storm bursting, shelter would be procurable—where there was some inn at which he might have his tea while waiting until the rain was over. The only one that he was acquainted with near Canterbury was the Grapes—the roadside inn where he first saw Jemima. Towards this, then, he decided to wend his way. Coming, just as he made this decision, to a point where several streets crossed one another, and being a little uncertain as to which he ought to take, he asked of an errand boy the way to the Grapes Tavern and tea-gardens. The boy, knowing well the tavern referred to, told Arthur the way that he must go to get into the road that led to it.

Now it so happened that Arthur's father, having left the public-house, was at that moment coming down one of the cross streets just mentioned, mistakenly believing that he was going towards the Cathedral. Though at a considerable distance from him he spied Arthur speaking to the errand boy.

But Arthur did not see his father, the street being a busy one, and having many people and vehicles in it at the time. There was too much noise, too, for the voice of his father to be heard by Arthur at the distance he was from him.

Howard the elder saw that his son, directly after he had spoken to the errand boy, crossed over the street down which he himself was coming, and then went up a street almost at right angles with it—consequently he quickly lost sight of the object of his pursuit. He commenced to run towards the spot where he had seen Arthur disappear, but being bloated and short-winded he could not run very swiftly. Meanwhile he noticed that the errand boy to whom Arthur had spoken chanced to be coming towards him. When the boy got up to him he stopped running, and asked the boy where the gentleman at the corner, that he had seen him speaking to, wanted to go. He was, he said, his cousin, and he had come to Canterbury to meet him, but had missed him. The boy answered that the gentleman wanted to go to the Grapes Tavern and tea-gardens. Howard the elder gave the boy twopence, and requested him to direct himself to the same place. This the gratified young urchin at once did, and then went on his way whistling spiritedly the air of the "The same Old Game." Arthur's father knew that he had now no

chance of overtaking on foot the object of his pursuit, so, as soon as he could succeed in getting one, he engaged a hackney carriage to take him to the "Grapes," expecting that he should overtake Arthur on his way there.

By the time Howard the elder had started in the hackney carriage, Arthur, having walked quickly, had got quite out of the city, and having asked his way again, had left the carriage road to proceed a nearer way to the "Grapes" through some secluded lanes. As soon as he found himself in the first of these he slackened his pace, and, proceeding leisurely, occupied his mind in considering what modifications of his arrangements in regard to his father were now called for by the latter's unexpected conduct.

While thus considering he remembered with satisfaction that, by Mr. Hardy's advice, a clause had been inserted in his will in relation to the trust to be created for the benefit of his father, by which clothes and other things supplied to the latter by the trustees were made to remain their property, so that should his father pawn or dispose of any of these he would render himself liable to legal prosecution. Though most reluctant to do so, he yet felt that he must now not hesitate to act with the same wholesome severity as it had been thought advisable the trustees referred to should have the power given them to do. This

was required of him, he thought, if he purposed seeking to religiously fulfil the dying wish of his mother associated with her parting gift to him of the gold locket. For what was her first great wish in regard to her much-loved though degraded husband? That he should cease to be a drunkard. And by all lawful ways to seek to deprive the dipsomaniac of the power to satisfy his diseased craving, was to act in accordance with opinions of hers that he (Arthur) had often heard her strongly express. Often, too, had he heard her relate how one evening, when her husband had already drunk too much, and was dozing for a moment, she had locked up both the cellaret and the wine-cellar, and hidden the keys, and how, when he awaking, being unable to get more drink at home, was about to go out to get some, that she had clasped her hands around his neck, and, with all her strength, had sought to hold him back, while passionately weeping she cried out, "You shall *not* go on ruining body and soul with drink—I *will* save you." "Nor," she would add with fanatical delight, "did I then unclasp my hands from around your father's neck until he struck me on the bosom with his clenched fist — that cruel, fatal blow! — and I fainted." In resorting, then, to extreme measures in order to cure his father of his dipsomania, Arthur felt satisfied he was but acting in strict accordance

with his mother's wishes—that by so doing, he was devoutly keeping to the fulfilment of the vow he had taken in expiation of his own shameful drunkenness by her bedside in her last moments—that he was, as it were, acting rigidly as an automaton, exactly as it had been adjusted by his mother to play to her "prodigal" husband her special part of the "Monomaniac of Love" when she herself should be no more. The hands of this automaton, then, he resolved, moved as her love directed, should clasp the slave of vice tenaciously around the neck, to keep him from drink as long as they were able—its voice, as her voice, should with resolute fanaticism proclaim, "I *will* save you."

"But," mentally, said Arthur, after a slight break in his reflections, "should my feeble frame succumb before I can fully accomplish the work that has been given me to do, still, through me, there can be little doubt that work will be ultimately fully accomplished. The trustees, with full powers, that I have appointed in my will, will bring this to pass. My father's painful malady, though not one that quickly kills, is one that will surely increase in severity. Though tardy in doing so in his case, Nature is manifestly about to inflict upon him the bitter penalties she, sooner or later, always inflicts upon men who outrageously violate her organic laws. Prostrating pain must soon put my sinning father at the mercy of other

I not live, though the time is near at hand, to see him thus afflicted and helpless, yet, when that moment comes, my friends whom I have appointed to execute my *will* shall execute my mother's *will* too. Through them the guilty man shall still feel the hands of his cruelly ill-used wife clasped around his neck—clasped too firmly for him to wrench asunder — become, though wearing velvet gloves, clasped hands of iron, saving him, in spite of himself, from the damning demon of strong drink."

At this point in his reflections a swimming in the head, of which for some few minutes he had been conscious, became sufficiently unpleasant to cause him some little uneasiness of mind. He feared that one of his attacks of giddiness was coming on. Should he suffer under one of these attacks while walking, he would be liable, he thought, to fall and injure himself. He decided, then, that he would suspend his reflections, and hasten on as quickly as possible to the Grapes Tavern. There he proposed to rest awhile and have some strong tea, after which he hoped he would be better.

But as, acting according to his decision, he hurried along, the swimming in his head quickly developed into a very troublesome giddiness, that now and then caused him to stagger in his walk. It was then that he discovered that he must have, most unaccountably

(for it was his constant companion in his walks), left his umbrella on the seat in the Dane John, where he distinctly remembered having placed it before sitting down. To go back and look for it, however, he decided was, just then, quite out of the question; but he missed it terribly, as he sorely needed something to lean on.

Once, thinking that he was going to fall, he stretched out his right hand to catch hold of the hedge at the side of the lane, and chanced to grasp a branch of a bramble, the thorns of which pricked his hand severely, as he had no glove on it. The pain of this acted as a nervous stimulus that temporarily overcame his giddiness and enabled him to walk better for some minutes. His sole anxiety now was to get to the Grapes Tavern and order some strong tea. He hoped this might invigorate his brain, cure his giddiness, and enable him to think. As it was, he felt himself in an increasing degree becoming distressingly incapable of thinking. Presently his only distinct mental consciousness became that of his own deplorable helplessness of mind.

Soon after he had found himself in this distressful state he entered the carriage-road again—the last lane along which he had come terminating in it. At not more than a hundred yards' distance he then saw swinging before him the signboard of the "Grapes."

But though so near the end of his journey, he feared he should not have power to finish it, so severe had his indisposition now become. In addition to the troublesome giddiness, he now felt an overpowering drowsiness. Staggering along like a drunken man, he heard some one behind him cry out, "Hold up, old man!" and looking back, he saw a policeman a short way off. Fearing that he might get taken into custody, through the policeman supposing him to be drunk and unable to take care of himself, he made desperate efforts to reach the "Grapes." When he at length succeeded in doing so, he almost fell against the landlady, Mrs. Death, who, in widow's weeds, was standing at the door.

"I cannot admit you: you have had too much to drink already," she said to Arthur, who endeavoured to enter the bar.

"I have not been drinking: I am ill. I only want some tea," answered Arthur, persisting in trying to enter the house.

"I really cannot admit you just at present, seeing the state you're in. That policeman, who is watching you, is a teetotaler, and is very spiteful against publicans: he might get me into trouble for admitting a drunken man on my premises."

Looking back again, Arthur saw that the policeman who had spoken to him was close by, with his eye upon him.

"I must beg of you to go on your way," added the landlady of the "Grapes," seeing that Arthur did not move, but stood supporting himself against one of the doorposts.

"I am too ill to walk further," replied Arthur. "I assure you that I have not been drinking. I don't want any drink; I only want some tea. I am a friend of Mr. Andrews—of Mr. Andrews that has married Miss De Vere that used to be here."

"Then go and have a rest in the field opposite for a little while, and when the policeman is quite out of sight come back here, and you shall have some tea."

As the landlady of the "Grapes" spoke thus she pointed to the stile on the opposite side of the road, over which was the field where Arthur had once (when he first visited Canterbury) been so strangely affected at beholding the crimson glow of sunset reflected on the upper windows of the tavern, and on those of the row of cottages on either side of it.

Arthur, through the abnormal condition of his brain, was so mentally befogged and destitute of volitional power, that he was thankful to have some one to think and will for him as to the next step that he had better take. He then set about crossing over the road to the stile opposite, that he might get into the field, as Mrs. Death advised him. But his movements in endeavouring to do so were so absurd that

the landlady of the "Grapes," and the constable, who had come up and stood by the tavern door, could not refrain from laughing. They remarked that, stumbling and staggering, he ever and anon stretched out his tightly closed, but empty, right hand, and leaned forward upon it, and then, as a natural consequence, almost fell upon his face to the ground.

This ludicrous action was simply automatic. Arthur was almost unconscious of what he was about, but it being his habit to continually make use of his umbrella as a stick to lean on when walking, his right hand, being now unchecked by reason, acted as if it grasped as usual the handle of his umbrella. When within a few paces of the stile he leaned so hardly upon the imaginary umbrella, that, in spite of the most desperate efforts, he failed to recover his balance, and came down sprawling upon all fours.

"Hold up, old man!" shouted out the teetotal policeman, derisively. And then, turning to the landlady of the "Grapes," he remarked, "He's had a nice skinful."

"It looks like it," replied the landlady.

Scrambling up to the stile, Arthur managed to crawl over to the other side of it. When his feet had reached the bottom step-board, he sat down on the upper step, with his back resting against the bar at the top of the stile, and so remained motionless.

CHAPTER XL.

HUNTED DOWN.

The hackney-carriage hired by Howard the elder to take him to the "Grapes" having been driven at a rather brisk pace, its occupant arrived at that tavern long before Arthur. Not having seen the object of his pursuit on the road, Arthur's father had inquired of his driver if there was more than one way to the "Grapes," and he had learnt from him that there was a rather shorter and more pleasant way for foot-passengers through some lanes. He rightly concluded that his son had asked his way again (for the errand boy had only mentioned the road) and been told of the lanes, and then had naturally chosen to come through them.

Arrived at his destination, Howard the elder took up his position in the large public sitting-room on the first floor of the tavern, at an open window just over its principal entrance door. There, puffing out his puffy, bilious-looking cheeks as he blew out dense clouds of tobacco smoke from his rank pipe, and

swilling glass after glass of adulterated gin-and-water, he awaited his son. He had told the landlady in the bar that if a rather tall and dark gentleman, with a beard, who looked in bad health, came, to show him into the same room as he himself was in, as he had heard, accidentally, that a friend of his, answering to that description, was likely to visit the "Grapes" that afternoon.

When, from the window, at which he was seated so that he could see into the road but not easily be seen from it, Howard the elder perceived Arthur emerge from the lanes recently mentioned and advance towards the tavern, he very quickly discerned, through being familiar with all the little peculiarities of appearance of his son when in that state, that the latter was suffering from one of the attacks of giddiness to which, since his illness, he was liable. On seeing this, the debauched schemer rubbed his hands gleefully, and then, taking his pipe out of his mouth for a moment, exclaimed mockingly, "'The Lord hath delivered him into our hands.'" For, he thought, "He is now in a state in which I shall be able to pour what I like down his throat without his hardly knowing what I am doing, supposing I cannot seduce him into drinking voluntarily."

The scheme, to carry out which Howard the elder had followed his son to Canterbury, may be briefly

stated. He proposed to tell Arthur an artfully prepared story about having heard that morning, through an acquaintance he chanced to meet, who was staying at Ramsgate, that a great friend of his own, in London, was in the very last stage of consumption, and in the most deplorable poverty. This friend, he further meant to say, had once been very kind to him, and hence he felt a very great regard for him. He longed to see him before he died, and, if possible, to supply him with the means of procuring some of the comforts he so cruelly needed. The delay of a day even might result in all help coming too late, and hence when he learned at Margate that his son had come to Canterbury he had hurried after him, expecting to see him at afternoon service at the Cathedral, if not before. Having thus explained the object of eagerly seeking an interview with his son, the schemer intended, if he possibly could, either by fair means or foul, to get Arthur into an aggravated form of the condition into which guests at charity dinners are brought before the collection is made. When his victim was maudlin drunk he intended to try and extract from him five or ten pounds, nominally to enable him to visit his poor dying friend in London and to materially befriend him in his dire necessity. What he really intended to do with any money—supposing he should be successful in his scheme—that

he might get from Arthur, was to expend it in satisfying his burning thirst for a debauch.

But the exulting schemer at the upper window of the "Grapes" was very much disconcerted at finding that his intended victim, on reaching the tavern door, was refused admittance. And he was still more disconcerted when, as Arthur continued sitting on the stile, the policeman said to the landlady of the "Grapes,"—

"He seems so far gone that I think, for his own protection, I had better take him into custody. He might get into bad company, and be robbed."

"His head is nodding as if he's dozing," answered the landlady. "Perhaps if he's left to sleep a little bit he may get better, and be able presently to go on his way."

"I don't want to lock him up, if I can help it," rejoined the constable: "he appears to be a respectable man." And he stood hesitating whether he should take charge of Arthur or not.

"I'll go down and say to the policeman," now thought Arthur's father, "that I'm the father of the gentleman who is indisposed on the stile there, and that I expected to meet him at the Grapes Tavern this afternoon, but that, seeing the state he is in, I will go with him to his present home at Margate as quickly as possible, taking him in my hackney-carriage to the station at Canterbury."

Having reflected thus, Howard the elder emptied his glass of gin-and-water and went down to the front door of the inn to speak to the constable.

The policeman was glad to be relieved from the necessity of locking up Arthur, and so, after taking down in his note-book the name and address of the latter's father, and the address at Margate to which he was going to take the seemingly tipsy man, he readily agreed to his taking charge of Arthur.

"Better not disturb the gentleman just for a minute or two," said the landlady. "Even a few minutes' sleep may do him a world of good."

"If we don't disturb him directly, the rain soon will, I fancy," answered Howard the elder, looking up at the clouds that were black and threatening. The distant booming of thunder, too, was now heard. "I don't see my carriage anywhere about," he continued. "I told the driver that I should want him to take me back to Canterbury."

"The driver wanted some refreshment, and so took your carriage into the stable-yard," explained the landlady.

"Will you tell him," said Arthur's father, "to bring it out at once, and to put the hood up. And let me know also what I have to pay you."

"Yes, sir."

While others were discussing what was to be done

with him, Arthur was making, in a dream, the visit to Canterbury Cathedral that he had recently been so unpleasantly prevented doing in reality. And, his mind influenced by his recent conversation with Miss Brown in the Dane John, he was making that visit in a thoroughly dream-like way, that is, under imaginary circumstances utterly impossible of realisation. He dreamt that he was in the choir of the Cathedral in the olden time, and that the soft pure light of six white wax candles burning on the high altar, in golden candlesticks, symbolised the light that had been brought into the world by the Divine Man. *His* image, representing Him as stretched upon the cross, with the mocking crown of thorns encircling His head, stood enthroned above the tabernacle in the midst of the golden candlesticks. The suspended lamp, with a crimson glass, burning in front of the altar, announced to him (for in his dream he imagined himself to be a devout Roman Catholic) that upon it rested, under the appearance of material bread, the Reality of the Bread of Life—the body of the risen Christ. The silk curtains to the tabernacle, in which was this presumed Divine Presence, and the other hangings and decorations of the altar, being of crimson, proclaimed that some glorious martyrdom was being then commemorated by the Church. High Mass was about to be celebrated, and

the Asperges had begun. Repeating in a low voice the psalm "Miserere," and sprinkling on each side of him, with the aspergil, holy water from a golden vessel borne by an acolyte, and preceded by three other acolytes, one of them carrying a processional crucifix and the two others lighted wax candles, the priest, clad in a crimson cope, moved solemnly from the altar, while the choir chanted,—

"Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo, et mundabor: lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor"—"Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be cleansed: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow."

In his dream it seemed to Arthur that, as he bowed reverentially and crossed himself as the priest passed by him, unusually large and numerous drops of the holy water fell upon his face and hands. At this he awoke, to find himself, not in the beautiful Norman choir of Canterbury Cathedral, but beneath an arched roof of storm clouds in an infinitely grander temple, and pure water direct from heaven being plenteously sprinkled on him.

Thoroughly aroused by the fast-falling rain, he stood up on the bottom step of the stile, and, turning round, looked at the tavern inquiringly, to see whether he might venture to take shelter there. As he did so, his giddiness was so extreme that he was

obliged to catch hold of the top bar of the stile to save himself from falling. But thinking it might make his head better to let the wind and the rain momentarily play upon it, he raised his right hand away from the bar, and, holding on to this with his left, took off his deerstalker hat. This gave him some little relief, for the hat, to be kept from being blown off, had been pressed down too tightly on his head, as was shown by a deep red indentation across his forehead. But though feeling slightly relieved, he certainly did not look, to any of those regarding him, as at all fit to be left to take care of himself. Notwithstanding that he grasped tightly the bar of the stile, he could not stand steady: his face had an unearthly pallor and his eyes a most strange expression. The wind, too, that was now blowing violently in fitful gusts, heightened his weird appearance by blowing his hair wildly about.

Great was his dismay at beholding that his pursuer, whom he had believed to have left behind him at Canterbury, had succeeded in hunting him down. And that feeling of dismay was much aggravated as he saw that by his father's side, watching him, was the policeman who had seen, and who, he thought, had doubtlessly informed him of, his staggering state when walking in the road near the "Grapes." "He will, I fear," said Arthur, mentally, "believing me

to be helplessly intoxicated, hand me over, as a matter of course, to the tender mercies of my heartless and unprincipled father." And as he recollected that afternoon of horrible temptation, when he was awoke from a half-comatose sleep by his tipsy father pressing a glass of brandy to his lips, he shuddered. For in the state in which he now found himself, would his father have much difficulty in making him intoxicated? Might he not easily do it by force, if his (Arthur's) will refused to sanction his drinking the poison that would paralyse it? And would not making him drunk be the easiest means for his father to attain what no doubt was his object in coming after him, the getting money for a debauch?

These reflections, rapidly passing through Arthur's mind, were not as here formulated in words, but were seen rather as a succession of momentary lightning-like flashes of consciousness. And what *might* happen, it seemed to him in his state of terrified excitement, was undoubtedly about to happen. What horrible crimes will not men commit when mad-drunk! He and his father were about to become mad-drunk, and were also then about to commit horrible crimes. He felt as if he and the wretched man he sought to save were tottering on the very brink of a fearful abyss of vice. "Heaven help me!" he cried, despairingly.

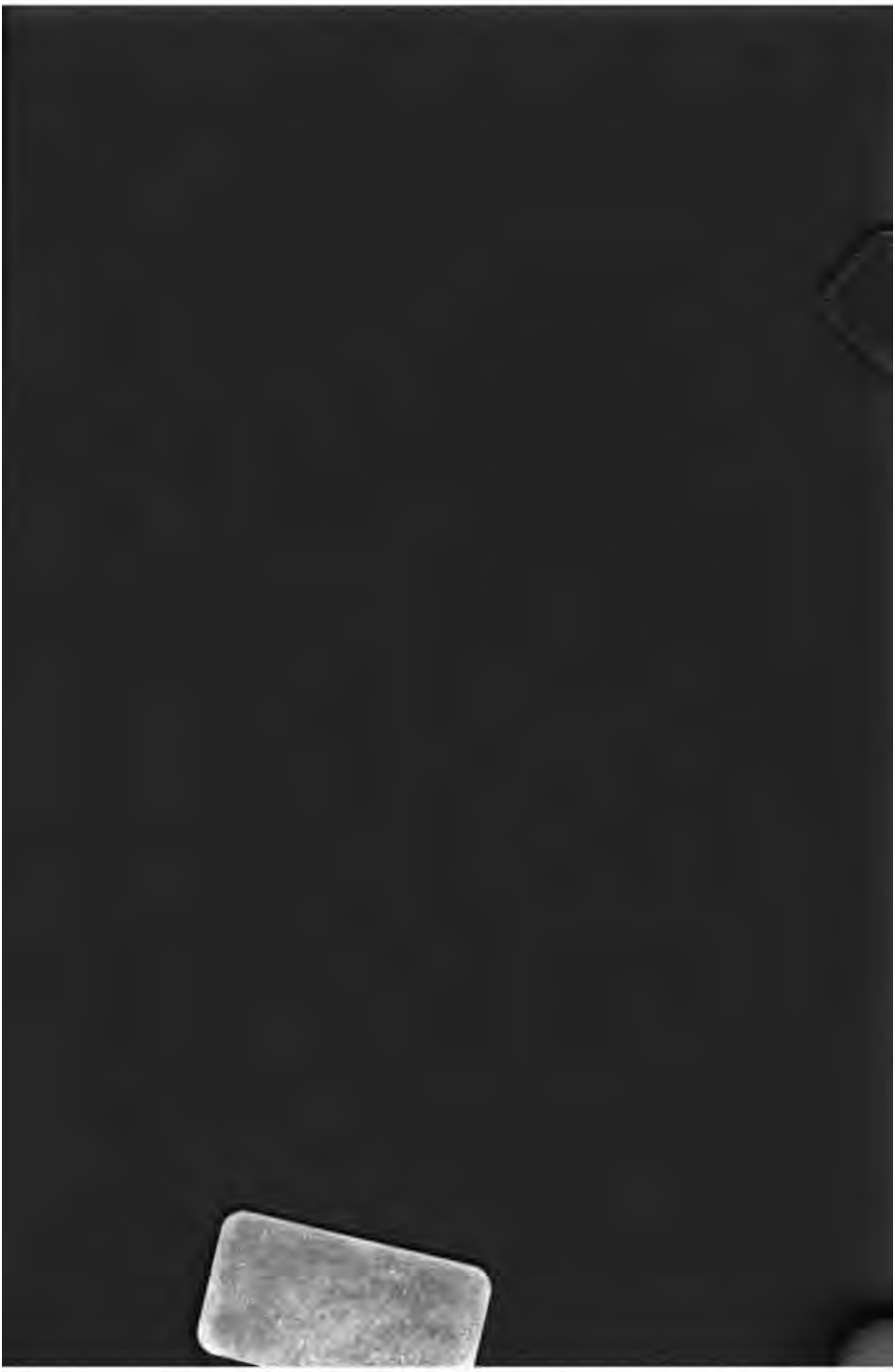
Seeing the hackney-carriage just coming out of the stable-yard, Howard the elder was about to cross the road to help his son over the stile, when the horse in the carriage reared back in affright, Mrs. Death, who had come forward with her bill, gave a loud scream, and everybody near involuntarily, for an instant, closed their eyes as a terrific flash of lightning seemed to strike the earth close by. On opening his eyes, Howard the elder saw that the object of his contemplated villainy was no longer on the stile, nor, looking excitedly around, did he discern him elsewhere.

"Escaped, by G—d!" he exclaimed, filled with such fury, at being thus suddenly and unexpectedly baulked of his prey, that he took no heed as to how his words might sound to those standing by.

"No, he has fallen off the stile into the field," said the policeman, who perceived, through the space between the steps of the stile, the feet and the lower portions of Arthur's legs lying on the ground. The rest of his body was hidden by the hawthorn hedge that divided the field from the road.

The constable ran across the road to see if Arthur was injured. Howard the elder followed him. As they were crossing, the thunder, crashing above them, was sublime in its deafening intensity. It rolled on like a wild peal of triumph. Far and wide its mighty

jubilant booming resounded as if some victory was being celebrated by Heaven's awful artillery. Awe-struck, the constable and his companion, having entered the field, bent over the body lying on the stubble of the recently reaped corn. They soon found that *he* who had tenanted that body had, indeed, escaped by God and to God—that terrific flash of lightning had shattered his prison-house and set *him* free.

THE END.

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